

# GIANTS OF CHINA



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# CHRONOLOGY OF CHINESE HISTORY

Huang Ti: the Yellow Emperor, reigned	? - 2598 B C
His children and grandchildren	2597 B C - 2368 B C.
The Age of the Five Rulers	
Tang	2337 B C. - 2257 B C
Yu	2256 B C. - 2207 B C
Hsia	2206 B C - 1767 B C
Shang	1766 B C - 1123 B C
Chou	1122 B C - 255 B C
Tsin Dynasty	246 B C - 206 B C
Han Dynasty	
West Han	206 B C - 8 A D
East Han	8 A D - 219 A D
The Six Dynasties	
Wei	220 A D - 264 A D
Tsin	265 A D - 419 A D
Sung	420 A D - 478 A D
Chi	479 A D - 501 A D
Liang	502 A D - 556 A D
Chen	557 A D - 588 A D
Sui Dynasty	589 A D - 617 A D
Tang Dynasty	618 A D - 906 A D
The Five Eras	
Liang	907 A D - 922 A D
Tang	923 A D - 935 A D
Tsin	936 A D - 946 A D
Han	947 A D - 950 A D
Chou	951 A D - 959 A D
Sung Dynasty	
Northern Sung	960 A D - 1126 A D
Southern Sung	1127 A D - 1278 A D
Yuan Dynasty (Mongolian)	1280 A D - 1368 A D
Min Dynasty	1368 A D - 1643 A D
Ching Dynasty (Mandchurian)	1644 A D - 1911 A D
The Republic of China	1912 A D

There is no record of Huang Ti's life as a child. Writing had not yet been perfected at that time, and he is remembered only by his outstanding and unusual accomplishments. Even the date of his birth has puzzled many historians. However, that he really lived is beyond any doubt.

The world was very young, the era five thousand years before the birth of Christ, and mankind slumbered under the shadow of darkness. People were governed by the wind and the rain, by the thunder and the storm, by the night and the day.

In the great country which we now know as China, lying to the west of the Pacific Ocean and east of India, man was learning to think. The light of knowledge was beginning to shine through the dark night of ignorance, and a new era was being born. The people had learned from their emperor Fu Hsi to hunt and to fish, to take wild animals from the fields and forests and tend them, to make records by the ties of knots, and to play musical instruments. Knowledge of medicinal herbs was the property of a few, and men were tilling the fertile fields with plough and rake. They used cattle to draw their plough and carry their burdens and could kindle fire to cook their food and warm themselves, a discovery made by the Emperor Shu Jen, who learned how to kindle fire by watching the birds strike sparks from the trees with their beaks.

One bright morning in the year 2698 B. C., which marked the beginning of the recorded history of China, the summer air resounded to the thunder of a huge brass gong, carried through the Chinese countryside by a tall, gaunt man, who hammered on the great round thing with a thick stick. People who heard the sound popped their heads out of the treetops and caves and mud huts in which they lived. They had never heard such a clangour before, and they were frightened as well as curious.

As the man struck the gong he shouted something. The

louder he shouted the harder he struck the gong and soon a crowd began to gather. Seeing that the people had assembled, the tall man began to talk to them in a clear, strong voice in order that everyone might hear. He had news that he tried to convey to them, but few could understand his tongue. They knew that he was a warrior by the spear he carried, and they knew that he had something unusual and exciting to tell. To some the sight of the big round gong that gave off the fearsome noise was more exciting than anything that had happened in their lives. What was this thing that shone in the light and sounded like the voice of the thunder god?

Some understood what the man had said, and tried to convey it to the others. He had announced that Chi Hsuen Yuen, the son of Hsiao Tien, had dethroned the tyrannical emperor, the eighteenth descendant of Shen Nung, and had defeated the invaders from the north led by Chi Yu and that the conqueror was coming home that day. Many of the people had never heard of Shen Nung or his descendants. All they knew was that sometimes soldiers came and robbed them, that their sons went away and came swaggering back with spears and swords of stone, and told stories of wars against the people of the north. Mostly they were simple folk with a respect for the heavens and a fear of strangers born of bitter experience.

But this great shining thing the man was beating was something to behold and to hear. When he had finished talking he began to beat the gong again, and to march slowly through the town his gong booming like a bear imprisoned in a pit. The people were so curious that they followed the man which was exactly what he wanted.

"Who is the son of Hsiao Tien?" asked the younger people.

"He is mighty and strong," answered the man, and *Boom* went the gong

"Where is the son of Hsiao Tien?" cried others

"He is coming home," answered the soldier, and struck the gong so that the mud flakes of the houses flew off at the thundering sound

"But why should we welcome him?" cried an old man whose hair was gray and who was very wise and had more courage than the others "Who is he, and what has he done that you bid us welcome him?"

"He is a bad son," said another "He has been away from home all this time What has he got that we should wait for him? Let us go back to our homes"

Boom! Boom! went the gong and the man began to speak again, his voice as hard as brass, his face as fierce as that of a tiger He told the people what had been happening in the outside world, and every time one of them interrupted him, he struck the gong

This is what he told them The son of their neighbour, Hsiao Tien had gone away to be a soldier The man could not tell them how long the boy had been gone because there was no calendar and no means of distinguishing one day from another This, however, did not worry the people, so they did not question him on such a detail Going away might be for the time between one night and one day, or many nights and days It was all the same to them

The story the man told them held their attention because it told of wars and mighty armies Chi Hsuen Yuen had joined the army of Pan Chuan (now Chuan Hopen Province) and had fought against the tyrant descendant of Shen Nung Shen Nung had been a wise man who developed the science of agriculture, and taught the people to till their soil and produce crops in rotation

Hsuen-Yuen, having vanquished the tyrant and defeated the Tartar barbarians led by Chi Yu, was returning to tell the Duke of Yueh-Hsiung that the land was in his hands and that the people would no longer be enslaved by the emperor or killed by the barbarians.

"You are free, my friends and neighbours," said the warrior. "This young hero, who is coming, is not only the son of your neighbour, but also your saviour. He brings your freedom in his hands."

"Ho ! Ho !" shouted the people, which was their way of cheering. "So we are safe ! Our children are safe, and no one will steal our animals." And promptly they began to shout and cheer and call everyone to follow the man with the gong who was leading them out onto the great yellow plain.

Soon word began to go round that the shining object was one of the inventions of the young man. This *Tung Lo*, brass gong, he said, was an example of the wonders Hsuen-Yuen could accomplish. Had he not made the round thing that was like the sun ? You might expect great things from a man who produced such magic ; and as a weapon of war it was equal to an army of immortals. The young saviour had beaten it in battle. So frightened were the enemies at the sound that they ran away or trembled so that they were easily overcome.

Beating the magic gong, the warrior led the people down the mountain road to the huge plain that stretched out for miles beyond the lush, green, fertile valley where their animals grazed contentedly. The plain was like a new world to many of the people, who had never been so far from home. It stretched away into the distance, losing itself in blue mist. At any other time they would not have dared to venture so far from home, but the gong seemed like a protecting god to them.

Soon, far away, they beheld a thin black line on the surface



of the plain. It curled away into the distance, but all the time it was moving towards them like a giant snake. On seeing it, the man with the gong began to dance and shout and beat his gong with renewed vigour. The people who were near him discovered why. The dark line was the army of the saviour — hundreds of men, some on horses, some on foot, all with weapons of war. And, leading the procession, prominent as the horn of a unicorn, rode a man on a pure white horse. He was clad in a sheepskin robe, and upon his head was a helmet of the same shining material as the gong.



"The saviour!" cried the man with the gong. "Greet him, neighbours!"

The people were a little frightened to see this great army approaching. They knew that in the plain they were at the mercy



of the horsemen, while among the hills and valleys they could run and hide if attacked. So they all stood and waited, those who had stones in their pockets clutching them tightly should the need arise to defend themselves.

The man on the white horse halted his column and dismounted. He came towards the multitude and said, "Greetings, my neighbours. I come in peace." To his soldiers he said, "Go where you will, await only the call. These are your people, your friends. Be at rest with them."

Immediately the people who had come out to meet the army, and the men of the army, began to greet one another and gather in large and small groups. The young man remounted his white horse and watched them. He had no one to greet him, and he looked so distinguished and noble that none of the people knew what to say to him. There was in the crowd, however, an old, old man who had a white beard and wise eyes set under tall, wrinkled brows.

He was leaning on his long stick, watching the young man, who sat erect on the white horse. He saw that the young leader's face was bronzed by his long exposure to wind and sun. He marked the bright black eyes, the high cheekbones and the sensitive mouth. He noticed, too, that the young man's sheepskin was so fashioned as to fit his shapely body while those of the other soldiers were loose and tattered. He observed how straight the young man sat on his horse, and the soldierly dignity that was everywhere round him. This young soldier, the old man thought, was a person of promise. The patriarch had come specially to see him by order of the Duke, who had been advised by spies of what had happened.

Quickly telling a servant who was with him that he would be bringing a visitor to the Duke's abode, the old fellow hailed the young man on the white horse, as if he were a friend. "Surely

you are none other than the son of my neighbour Hsiao Tien," he said. "You must be. And are you not the man who led the troops who defeated the eighteenth descendant of Shen Nung, and vanquished the Tartar Chi Yu?"

As soon as the newcomer saw the old man, he again dismounted, stepped forward and stood on the ground with his hands together, giving the old man a respectful greeting. "Yes, my distinguished friend," he said, "I have the honour to be the son of Hsiao Tien."

The old man was a little taken aback by the young man's greeting. The people of the neighbourhood never had such manners. He stood there staring at the hero and admiring him. He realized that a lifetime must have passed since his neighbour's son had left, and that the young man had learned much; and he was thinking that here was someone who would be a great asset to the Duke. He knew, too, that even this young man would be susceptible to a little flattery, and he was glad he had decided to send the servant back to the Duke.

"The Duke has heard of your successes," he said, "and he is himself coming to meet you at the main thoroughfare of our town. He is grateful to you."

"O Sir," answered the young man, "his lordship should not have disturbed himself. What I have done is nothing. I am afraid I shall make myself appear foolish in the presence of the mighty one."

"Come with me, my son," the old man insisted, and they set off together, the young warrior leading his horse. As they came to the main thoroughfare of the town, which was but a collection of mud dwellings and tents, sure enough, the Duke was waiting with his councilmen. Dressed in a robe of bearskin and a fur helmet, with rings of shells and beads on his fingers, and his

hair done up on top of his head, the Duke greeted the young warrior as if he were a king instead of a soldier.

The Duke had good reason to be so respectful to Chi Hsuen Yuen, because he and his neighbours lived in dread of the power of force and of the armies of the Tartars. He was old and gray, and his power was waning. Actually, he was little more than a farmer, but he owned more land and more animals than his neighbours, and so he was the feudal lord of the neighbourhood. Adjoining his lands were the properties of other dukes like himself, all of whom wanted protection against the enemies in the north.

Without waiting for formalities, he then and there proposed to Chi Hsuen-Yuen that he should be made king of the region in return for the protection by the army he had formed. "Under your mighty arm," said the old Duke, "this land will be a better place to live in. The people will be free, and our children will multiply. Without your protection the enemies will come again, and we shall all be slaves."

Chi Hsuen Yuen tried to refuse, but no one would listen. That afternoon, therefore, the great bronze gong rang out again, and the warriors ran through the countryside proclaiming that Chi Hsuen Yuen was to rule the land whose soil was yellow. Thus he was called the Yellow Emperor, Huang Ti. Neighbouring kingdoms sent representatives, and it became known for hundreds of miles around that Hsuen Yuen had become the Yellow Emperor.

Poor Hsuen Yuen was more than perplexed by the new honour bestowed on him. As a soldier, he had done his best, as the son of a peasant, he had worked hard and learned to respect the seasons of the year and the land, the sun and the moon, but suddenly to be made Emperor had troubled him. For days he remained alone pondering over his problem. Power he had never

wanted, all that he had tried to do was to conquer and destroy the enemies who ravaged his land

Then into his thoughts came a great calm. He saw that even if it was an honour to be Emperor, it was also a responsibility with a great deal of hard work. If soldiers could be trained and led to fight the enemy in war, so could citizens be taught how to make a nation strong within. The thought had come to him as he stood on a hilltop gazing down at the great plain across which he had led his armies. He looked at the sky, at the rocks and the trees which were to him the manifestation of the Creator, and he took an oath with himself. He would take the honour and would use the experience he had gained in foreign lands to improve the living and thought of his people.

As Hsuen Yuen took that oath, he could not have known what was happening in the world outside his own. At that time Europe was still in absolute darkness. The Egyptians were building their pyramids on the bank of the River Nile, the Sumerians and the Assyrians had invented nail writing on clay tablets, Babylon was still an independent state. But the people who lived along the Nile and the Mesopotamia did not know there was another group of people in another continent known as the *Chung Yuan*, the central plateau which is China today. What was taking place there while they the Assyrians, Sumerians and Egyptians were fighting and dying for the occupation of the fertile region of the Nile — all this was unknown to them.

Huang Ti was soon to find that his life was not going to be an easy one. His subjects lived in darkness and fear, sleeping in holes in the ground and existing little better than the animals they tended. Many died from sickness and exposure, and few had any conception of what the world he had seen only a few miles away was like. As he walked among them, their poverty and misery filled him with pity. Day after day he tried to think what

did not know how to use it. He had seen things in the outside world, had learned how the tribes of the north were living. He could not help thinking of the dead man being thrown into the soil like an animal, of his companions, dull and unenlightened, not caring what happened to them, living only for the moment, without hope or constructive memory.

He would have to find a way of improving their lives. He thought of the period between the rising of the sun and its setting, of the night that came and went, of the difference in the days - how some were warm and some were cold, how the sun shone longer on the warm days, and hardly appeared at all during the cold weather. To him it seemed that these changes had a significance, that they were something to which one should attach importance. If he could tell his people that each day was different from every other, that they were better than the animals, he might make a beginning.

Huang Ti remembered too, how the people of the north tilled their soil, raised crops and lived in comparative comfort. With such thoughts in his mind, he tossed and turned, unable to sleep. Suddenly he got up and shouted with joy, as an idea occurred to him.

During the campaign against the Tartars, he had contrived a means of moving heavy catapults and weapons over the ground without carrying them. He had at first laid the heavy thing he wanted to move across a tree trunk and pushed it, so that the tree trunk rolled over and brought the object with it. That had been satisfactory for battering rams, but progress was slow. Huang Ti had then worked out a better idea. He had fashioned narrow discs like the tree trunks and joined them by a shaft, across which he laid the burden to be carried, with the shaft turning in a niche. Thus was the beginning of the wheel which has served mankind so usefully and generously ever since.

The wheels that Huang Ti had used until then were employed only in war, and often, to bring the stones and rocks used as weapons to the enemy's territory, it had been necessary to have soldiers learn the countryside so that the heavy carts could roll easily. In this manner the first roads had been planned.

Huang Ti's great idea was to make cleared spaces or roads in this territory over which he ruled, and show the people how to build carts of wood and bronze, the new metal he had discovered and had used for the gong and for his weapons. He could begin that way. Then he would make utensils of bronze from which the people could eat instead of taking their food from the ground like the animals. He thought of the clothes he wore, of the apparel he had seen, and how fine it would be if the people of his community could be taught to clothe themselves and acquire the dignity and respect to which he believed mankind was entitled.

Such must have been the thoughts of this man all those thousands of years ago. Where did they come from, and why did they awaken in the mind of a young soldier in distant China?

Huang Ti rose and walked out into the open. Above him the moon sailed in the sky like a huge silver ball. For many nights when he had been with his army, Huang Ti had watched the moon grow bigger, come to ripe fullness and then diminish until it disappeared. That, he decided, was a means of relating man's life to nature. A day when the moon was big was different from a day when the moon was just a thin crescent with a dark shadow. After the moon came the sun, which rose full in the East and soared like a ball of fire across the top of the world, to sink in the West — that was the day.

Pondering over all these things, Huang Ti walked for miles through the night. Sometimes the beasts roared, but he was not afraid, for his mind was too exalted to harbour fear. And when



he looked at the moon high in the heavens, he came to the conclusion that, even as he watched, another round moon was passing away. That, he decided, was one way to tell the time.

He remembered the principle of *Yin* and *Yang*, and the five elements—metal, wood, water, fire, earth, of which his father had told him. His father had learned from his grandfather, and his great grandfather had told his grandfather. *Yin* was the shadow, which signified the female. *Yang* meant the sun or brightness, which signified the male. All beings needed these two principles — *Yin* and *Yang* — to live and to continue to live. The *Yin* and *Yang* covered the length of time and space, and the five elements spanned the breadth of time and space in the universe. Everything man heard, saw, tasted, touched or smelled involved either these two principles or the five elements. Such was his simple knowledge. "With these principles I can work out other matters concerning living and dying, and human respect and dignity," he thought. And, having made this discovery, he was deeply happy as he walked on.

Presently he came to a collection of huts. Dark shapes showed dimly in the moonlight. He had hardly noticed them, when he heard men snoring, and then he heard another sound. It was the thin, frail cry of a newborn child. Huang Ti halted, scarcely breathing. Then somewhere in the darkness, someone rubbed sticks together and a flickering light sprang up and grew as a fire of underbrush was kindled.

Huang Ti stepped from the darkness into the small circle of light shining from the low doorway of a hut. "Neighbour," he called, "can I help you? I am Huang Ti."

The man bending over the fire inside the hut sprang to his feet and glared defiantly at the intruder. "Go away," he commanded, "or I shall kill you." He reached for a stone.

The young Emperor spoke gently to him. "I am your

Emperor," he said "I have come to help you Let me come into your hut "

"Come in, then," the man invited grudgingly, and dropped his weapon "Come in by the fire A child has just been born It is a great bother Why should a man be roused from sleep to kindle fresh fire because a woman has borne a child ? "

Huang Ti did not answer, but he took a slender brand from the fire and carried it to the far corner of the hut There, in a hollowed out bed of mud, lay the mother and her newborn child Their misery in the filthy hut, with the night wind blowing smoke and sifting ashes over them, moved the Emperor to a new awareness of his responsibility as a ruler

Sticking the burning brand in the mud as a candle, he removed his coat and laid it gently over the mother and child Throughout the night, while they slept, he helped the man to keep the fire burning, and when morning came he took his leave after explaining to him that he must look after the woman and their child always

Then he returned to his own hut, the beginning of a great resolve burning in his heart He was seeing the future, the way was clearer. Though weary from lack of sleep, he was in a delirium of excitement Huang Ti wanted to sing and dance for sheer joy A vast plan was taking shape in his mind, a great, central idea, from which other designs formed and grew He would bring law and order, civilization and happiness, to his people !

Thinking thus, the Emperor prepared to rest But first he had to determine whether or not a new day had dawned There was a light in the East, which betokened sunrise, so he was certain this must be a new day He would sleep, he decided, until the sun was halfway up the sky, and to his surprise, when he awoke, the sun was where he had thought it would be

Actually Huang Ti was just discovering his own active mind, but he did not know that and was puzzled and awed by the discovery. As soon as he awoke, he went to the brook near by, washed himself all over, put on his sheepskin garment and went to the centre of the town, beating his gong as he strode along.

The populace came running. Men, women and children all gathered round the big shining thing that gave out the majestic sound, and so anxious was everyone to see that those behind pushed those in front, and soon Huang Ti was pushed into the doorway of his own hut.

"Stop!" he shouted in the voice he used for his military commands. "Stand where you are and listen. I have something to tell you all. My friends, I, your Emperor, have good news for you. First I will explain this wonderful thing in my hands. For you all it is a blessing. Soon you will all be able to have one." Huang Ti was a true politician, he was clever enough to promise the people something to gain their attention. Then he made a speech.

"Friends and neighbours," said Huang Ti, "I have many things to talk over with you. I want to tell you not only about this bronze object in my hands, but about many other things. First, let me thank you all, especially our Duke and the other Dukes, for appointing me your leader. As Huang Ti spoke, he saw the Duke among the crowd. The old man was smiling and nodding his head.

"Friends," continued the young Emperor, "in my travels to the northern borders and south to the big river, I have seen many strange things and have come in contact with many strange peoples. This gong, made of a substance called bronze, was found among the troops of Chi Yu, whom we defeated in Tuan Lu. At first the sound of this strange thing frightened our men until the enemy came close enough for us to see that it was

neither thunder nor a demon that made such a noise, but only a round, harmless object. So we found our courage and slew them. Our enemies had weapons to fight with which we had never seen. They are made of the same substance as this." Huang Ti lifted the gong. "All the weapons we had were made of stone. The heavy, sharp new weapons of our invaders gave us no mercy. How we won the battle, Heaven only knows, but we won and captured the weapons. It was our determination not to be enslaved by anyone that gave us courage. If we had lost the battle, many of you women would have lost your brothers and fathers. But here we are, a victorious and free people. The tyrannical emperor who governed us is gone forever. From now on, with my ability and your help, we must and will do something for the benefit of us all.

"I learned something else while I was abroad, and I should like to talk it over with you. The world is changing. You have been living a tribal life in which men go out to hunt for animals and women stay behind to raise their crops. All that is very well because you can support yourselves and you do not have to count on others for food and supply. For generations we knew nothing of other tribes and peoples. Now we do know of them because they came to invade us. Others will come to do the same if we are not prepared.

"There will always be war as long as there are other tribes who will want to fight for the fertile soil. You must be organized to defend yourselves. You must struggle to improve your way of living, and to build defences so that you can fight against any invaders who may try to come over our borders. Danger besets us on every side. We must recognize it and do something. We must decide either to live as free men or to live as slaves and work for the invaders. I want your help to protect yourselves. Who among you that is strong of body and alert of mind will

volunteer to assist me in planning and in carrying out a system of government? Who will volunteer to help?"

No one answered. The people stared at one another in amazement. What did it all mean? They had never dreamed of such things, and yet the man had this wondrous shining thing that made a sound no one had ever heard before. If he could produce that, he might be able to do other things.

Presently a tall man far back in the crowd raised his hand and cried: "Away with him! We don't want things like that. We are too busy as it is. Away with him!"

Another cried: "Leave us in peace. You go and fight your battles if you like."

Another yelled: "All we want to do is to have food and shelter. We haven't enough food as it is. Who will provide us with food and shelter if we help you? Why should we organize a new mode of life?"

Huang Ti stood facing them, clutching his gong. He knew that the people did not respect him because he was young, and because he had something so new that they could not even comprehend it. Suddenly he was aware of someone standing beside him. It was the old Duke who had made him Emperor. As soon as the people saw the Duke, they were tongue-tied. The Duke could kill any of them by raising his finger and pointing. He had power, and the people knew it. They could see he was angry, and all stepped back a little. Huang Ti realized that the Duke was going to speak, and so, to honour the elderly man, he struck the gong once to silence the crowd. The Duke was very old and he had the dignity of age. He spoke slowly, that all might hear.

"Where would we be now if it had not been for this man?" The Duke pointed at Huang Ti. "He has seen many things that we have not seen. He knows many things that we do not

know. Shall we not, then, assist him in doing things for our greater good? He can provide you with food and shelter as he provided his soldiers with them. The other dukes and I have confidence in him. I volunteer. Who of you will be the next to volunteer?"

Again no one answered. Huang Ti was excited now. He spoke again in a loud voice, punctuating each sentence with a strike of the gong.

"I know what you have in mind," he said. (*Boom!*) "Listen to me." (*Boom!*) "You are thinking that life is good enough as it is. You have food to eat, and huts to live in, but that is not enough. Oh, listen to me, my friends! Listen and take heed! What I say is important. We live in caves and mudholes, don't we? That is not good enough. There are better ways of living. We sleep in a cave one night, and in a mudhole another, which is stupid and like the animals.

"Now, this is what I have in mind: First, we must form ourselves into small individual family units to take care of our old and young, our sick and those who cannot work. A man and a woman will be the head of each individual unit, and they will be bound to each other by a relationship called marriage. When a man and a woman are married, they will live together all the time in one place and go about their business of hunting animals and raising crops. When they have children, the responsibility of looking after them will rest upon that man and that woman.

"These individual units of men and women will form a community. I shall divide each community into nine regions on the fertile soil in the valley. Each region will have a hundred *mows* of land (each *mow* equals about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres). Each family will have 20 *mows* for itself, and plough them and reap the harvests for itself. Five families will make up a region, one region in the middle will be cultivated by the families of the eight regions

around it, and the harvest from it will go to the government, which will work with me for the welfare of you all " There was a long silence " And those who work with me will not have to worry about their problems of living," Huang Ti added slowly

Then someone answered. It was the man whom Huang Ti had helped the night before " It is a good thing," he said " This man helped me. He showed me that we can help one another. He has wise thoughts. I will follow him " He came to the front and knelt before Huang Ti " Emperor, when shall we begin our work? "

" Today," answered Huang Ti " What is your name? "

" My name is Chuang Chieh "

" You shall be my right hand man, my first minister

" Now, who else? Where are you men who fought with me in the battles? "

" Here I am! " cried the man who had beaten the gong in the village " I will join you "

" Good, Da Hsiao. Who else? "

Immediately everyone wanted to come. Sounds of ' I I ' came from the crowd. Huang Ti chose eight persons to be his chief ministers or assistants, and they in turn selected others to help them to carry out their work

That night they held a council. Nine men, including Huang Ti himself, were present, the others were Chuang Chieh, Da Hsiao, Ling Luan, Fei Yi, Kung Ku, Hu Chao, Chi Po and Yung Fu. Chuang Chieh was assigned to work out a scheme to record events that were happening. To Da Hsiao was assigned the task of devising some way of telling the time, by day, month and year. Ling Luan was ordered to create some kind of sound to relax man's soul, which obviously was what we should call music. Fei Yi had to plan weapons that would be better than swords and daggers. Kung Ku was to evolve means of travel on water as

well as on land, Hu Chao was to create something for man's clothing in place of skins. Chu Po was set to study plants and herbs to find a way of curing sickness and disease, and Yung Fo was to make coffins in which the dead could be buried with dignity.

When the meeting was over, and after the duties had been allotted, the nine men all began to discuss Huang Ti's new idea of the marriage bond between men and women.

"I think it is the best idea we have yet heard of," said Da Hsiao. "From now on I can live with my woman without being afraid that others may take her away from me."

"Da Hsiao," admonished Huang Ti, "my plan is not only for you to keep your woman, but for your woman to keep you as well. Most important of all, it is to give proper care to the children and to teach them all we know so that they can teach others when they are grown. The first thing to be done now," Huang Ti continued, "is to marry our men and women and so form the foundation of our community. We must see that every man chooses a woman and every woman a man."

"Huang Ti, my lord," said Chuang Chieh, "you have been wonderful to us. You have risked your life for the maintenance of us all. You have laboured with head and heart for our welfare. You told each of us to find a man and a woman and to marry. But what of yourself? You have no woman."

"My own happiness is unimportant," replied Huang Ti. "I am only one person. You are hundreds, thousands of people. At this time the mass of you is more important than the individual."

"If Huang Ti has no woman," said Da Hsiao, "we shall find him one."

"Yes, we shall find him one — a worthy one," echoed the seven men.



"Can any one of you think of anybody who has a daughter fair enough for our Huang Ti?" asked Chi Po.

"I know one," replied Kung Ku. "The Duke of Si Ling in the neighbouring valley has a daughter who is known for her beauty and intelligence."

"Then we shall negotiate with the Duke of Si Ling for his daughter's hand," said Da Hsiao.

That night Huang Ti again walked in the moonlight. He was happy and yet he was awed. Much had been accomplished. He had found men to do his will, to share his desire for progress, men to record the time of day, men to help the people to plough. Every idea of his own, every idea he had brought back from a foreign country, had been accepted, but — his ministers wanted him to marry.

Huang Ti had thought very little about women. They seemed stupid creatures, much lower than men, and with a woman at his side it seemed he might have too little time to busy himself with the government of his people. But he saw that if he did not take a woman to himself, his people might refuse to follow his advice. As he walked he began to hope, which was his way of praying, that Heaven would send him an intelligent woman. A good woman would be a help, he decided. She could talk to the women about things and in a way that a man could not. The more he thought of it, the more he hoped he would be blessed with a good wife.

All that night he thought of what he had accomplished and of what lay ahead. Before he fell asleep he had begun to plan how his wife could help him and how much good she could do for the community.

# 嫫祖



## CHAPTER II

### THE WISE EMPRESS

LEI TZU

(About the same time as Huang Ti)

HUANG TI, the Yellow Emperor, had accomplished a great feat in raising the standard of living of his people to a more dignified and civilized level when most of the world was still living in darkness. This was in many respects due to his careful choice of an able council. It was also because he had a good wife who lovingly helped him in everything and understood with woman's delicate intuition many of the people's needs which a man could not appreciate.

When the council finally came to the conclusion that they must find Huang Ti a wife, Chuang Chieh and Chi Po were given the task of going to the West to visit the Duke of Si Ling to ask the hand of his daughter for Huang Ti.

The fame of young Huang Ti's prowess had spread far and wide. The Duke of Si Ling had heard of it long before Chuang Chieh arrived. So, almost without protest, the Duke consented to let his daughter, Lei Tzu, the Lady of Si Ling, go to Huang Ti accompanied by Chuang Chieh, with his blessing and a contribution of food and land.

Huang Ti was overwhelmed with joy when he saw the lovely girl. He noticed that she was very different from the women of his own community. She was tall, slender and dignified. She had bright eyes, a small, round cherry like mouth and a delicate patrician nose. He was enchanted too, by her tiny hands and by her slender little feet encased in shoes of skin that she had fashioned for herself. He greeted her with the courtesy that he reserved for older men or noble people. The Lady of Si Ling returned his greeting, which showed that she too was civilized and thus different from the women he knew.

Immediately after they had met, Huang Ti took his lady to see the house of stone and wood which he had built for himself. Lei Tzu had never lived in anything more comfortable than a mud hut, and the house seemed to her luxurious beyond words. Huang Ti was happy to see the smile that came over her face. She could now stand up straight without touching the roof, and she could see the light come in through an opening in the wall, which in our language would be called a window. She saw, too, a raised bed just off the ground made of soft clay, on which were arranged skins for a warm covering on cold nights. This was indeed more than she had expected.

Like most human beings, Huang Ti had an instinctive love

of ceremony. He wanted to make the marriage an important occasion. He wanted the world to know that he was marrying Lei Tzu, the lovely Lady of Si Ling. To invest his marriage with dignity and importance, he went into the centre of the town around him. Standing beside the girl, he solemnly announced that they were married and would live together forever after.

A feast was prepared to mark the day as one of great importance. Fires were lighted and the people sat around talking and eating. To add to the celebration, one of the members of the council, Ling Luan, got up and sang to the community a song of five notes, which he called *Kung, Hsiang, Ko, Tzu* and *Yu*, and which the Chinese still use. The people had never heard such sweet sounds before. They found it so pleasant and soothing that they asked for more. The happy inventor promised to produce even more wonderful sounds. These became the Chinese musical scale.

After his marriage, Huang Ti continued to work in earnest to lay the foundations of China and of its culture according to the plan set forth by that momentous conference in the year 2698 B. C., the first year when the Chinese lunar calendar came into existence.

How quickly Huang Ti and his council worked we cannot say. Neither can we judge how many moons were born and waned before his immediate subjects began to experience the benefits of the great man's ideas. All we know is that a town was soon laid out with roads, and that groups of houses were built of stone instead of mud. The stones were hewn from the face of the mountain and were brought into the town. There they were piled one on top of the other and cemented with clay, as Huang Ti had seen the fortifications of the North built in steady formation.

The Yellow Emperor was faced with many difficulties,

among them the keeping of records. There were so many things to be done that he could not remember what he had done and what he had not done. The only memory aid in those days consisted in tying knots in cords. But it was not at all practical, because it was not a record, but only a memory aid that could be understood by the person who had tied the knots and by no one else. Huang Ti discussed his difficulties with Chuang Chieh and entrusted to him the task of finding some means of solving the problem.

To Chuang Chieh the matter of keeping records was no less a problem than to the Emperor. For days he pondered, and for days he could find no solution. He was, however, not easily deterred by the difficulties. He kept thinking and working on the device with which thoughts could be recorded and understood by all.

One day, as he was sitting on a sandy beach in the warm sunlight, very deep in thought, a bird came to rest in front of him. After it had flown away he noticed that its claws had left a mark in the sand. Chuang Chieh picked up a shell and meditatively copied the mark. As he was doing so, an idea suddenly dawned on him. He jumped to his feet and his heart swelled with joy. If a bird could leave the print of his claws on the sand, why could not a human being record his thoughts by drawing a series of pictures as he saw them?

The following morning he returned to the beach. With a stick he first drew in the sand the picture of a man. Then he drew pictures of a bird, a fish, a steep mountain and flowing streams. This was the answer to his problem. But the tide came and the pictures he drew were washed away. What could he do to have his pictures preserved? For days Chuang Chieh pondered.

He thought of carving his pictures on stones, but stones

were much too hard to be used, and too heavy to be handled. He thought of the bones of animals. They, he knew, had the quality of prolonged durability. He decided to try. He sharpened a small piece of stone as a tool to carve the pictures on the bones, and he succeeded. Then he proudly carried his pictures to Huang Ti. The Yellow Emperor, understanding that they could be preserved forever, which was what he wanted, was delighted with the invention. Very soon the few characters that Chuang Chieh had invented to carve on the bones were understood even by the most ignorant. The Emperor proclaimed their daily use, and soon even the children were learning to write. Such was the beginning of written Chinese.

But Huang Ti was not altogether satisfied with the progress around him. The recording of thoughts had now been achieved, but he wanted to record the periods of light and darkness, and the course of life. Da Hsiao had been entrusted with this task. The poor man probably found it as difficult as any at the time, but he succeeded.

Huang Ti's joy was great when Da Hsiao announced that he had evolved a system of telling the time of day, and the day of the year. It was worked out by observing the sun and the moon, and the periods of the full moons and the half moons. Few details of Da Hsiao's calendar are available now, except that it included the ten heavenly signs and the twelve earthly signs, which were more or less like the signs of the zodiac in the Western reckoning.

The time of day was determined by the shadow thrown on the ground by an upright stick which Da Hsiao planted in a position where it was exposed to the sunlight. The system of the Chinese lunar calendar has not changed since then. The ten heavenly signs and the twelve earthly signs make a cycle. Each cycle has sixty years, which are represented by twelve animals —

the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, snake, horse, ram, monkey, chicken, dog and pig — to make them easily understood by the people

The other councillors also had been busy, providing for the wants of the people. Each councillor was wrestling with and conquering his problem. In some ways it seemed as though miracles were happening and as though Heaven were blessing the little community with an abundance of discovery. Every member of the council pulled his weight and solved the problem assigned to him for the benefit of the community.

Kung Ku had observed a log floating on the surface of the water. He conceived the idea of the boat, first by tying the logs together, then by hollowing them with fire. After that he provided poles for the men to push the boats, and later the single oar that pushed the boat through the water as it was worked to and fro. Soon the people were carrying their goods to the river-side in carts and loading them on boats, which meant that the land on the other side of the river could be developed.

Fei Yi, who had been a soldier with the army of Huang Ti, had learned from his enemies the art of shooting an animal or a man from a distance, and thus he taught the people. So began the use of the bow and arrow. The bow was made from the branch of a willow tree, and the arrow had a stone tip to enable it to pierce the hide of the animal. Huang Ti had ordered every man in the community to learn to use the new weapon, and Fei Yi was appointed instructor. The discovery of the bow and arrow gave the community a sense of security, especially after a tribe of robbers who had come to attack them were routed in panic when the men of the village released their arrows in their direction.

To another member of the council, Chi Po, was entrusted the task of looking after the health of the people. He had also made good progress, and was beginning the use of herbal

medicine, which is still in use in China. The yellow Emperor was justly proud of his councillors, all of whom produced something useful.

The Lady of Si Ling wanted to do her share. Lei Tzu proved herself a worthy companion to the intelligent and hard working Emperor. She and Huang Ti often discussed how both of them could best serve the community. It was decided that all men and women should follow their example and divide the labour among themselves. The final arrangement was that the women should tend the homes and the land near by while the men worked in the fields. On days when the men went hunting, soldiers would be put on guard and women would take men's places to work in the fields. At harvest time, all the men, women and children were to work in the fields while the soldiers kept guard. The Empress also taught the women to keep their homes tidy and to cultivate their fields and vegetable gardens.

Years rolled by. Both Huang Ti and his Empress were almost too busy to notice the passing of time. The town had changed beyond recognition with its streets, its carts and its burial place where those who had died were laid to rest in wooden coffins, to the accompaniment of the gong's solemn music. Huang Ti, by attending all funerals, had impressed on his people the respect that was due the dead.

In the matter of births, Huang Ti and his Empress had provided many occasions for the beating of the gong. When Da Hsiao told them that by his calendar they had been married for twenty years, they had fourteen children.

In the years that had passed, astonishing progress had been made. The arrows used by the bowmen were now tipped with metal, and each household had vessels made of pottery. Implements were made to till the soil, and pots were provided to cook



food over the fires. The foundations of a good living which were to endure through the ages, had been laid.

The Empress Lei Tzu herself was among the busiest of women. After she had finished tidying her own house, she would visit the houses of other women and show them what to do in order to make themselves clean and comfortable. Her own house was a model of industry and neatness. When not occupied with other things, she cultivated the land surrounding the dwelling, planting trees which produced luscious mulberries and tall trees to give shade to the grass on which she put the younger children to play. To prevent dogs and wild animals from coming on to the land to attack the children and steal the food, she had had a wall built around her property.

Like all housewives, Lei Tzu found that one of her problems was to make sure that she had enough food for her growing family through the dark, cold months of winter, when the fields were not producing and when hunting was difficult. This she solved to a certain extent by picking the fruit in the garden, pounding it in a clay vessel with a heavy pestle and then pouring it into pots of baked clay. These she covered tightly and stored on the shelves, very much as the American housewife does today. Above all things the Empress loved her garden.

She had learned to play the instrument that Ling Luan had invented and knew the five notes of the scale he had devised. She found that she could reproduce music with her voice by humming and singing. Often when the work in the house was done, Lei Tzu would walk in her garden, singing happily, picking flowers and big, ripe mulberries from the bushes. In her kitchen were clay pots for cooking and there were bowls to eat from at table. There was also a big bowl with a pestle or pounder, the invention of Chi Yi, by means of which she and her children could beat the kernel of the grain and make it into flour. Also

there was a row of pots containing herbal medicines produced by Chi Po

The Empress must have been as satisfied as her husband with the progress of the kingdom. Hu Chao had inaugurated a system of clothing, and had decreed that in the heat of summer people should wear less clothing than in winter. Some means of weaving cloth and dyeing clothes in tasteful colours had been evolved. There were clothes for ceremonial occasions and for work.

The Empress herself had changed a great deal since she came to be the wife of the Emperor. Instead of wearing her hair in long disorder down her back, she had learned to roll it in a bun at the oape of her neck, and to secure it with the bone of a fish, or a stick of wood, to which she sometimes attached a bright flower from the garden.

One fine spring day the Empress walked in her garden, humming a tune and carrying on her arm a big basket woven of reeds from the river bank. Every few steps she would stop and pick a bit of ripe fruit. At one tree she stopped suddenly and watched something she had never seen before. The tender tips of the leaves of the mulberry bush were moving. It looked as though they were alive. At first the Empress thought it was the breeze, but there was no breeze, and the leaf tip was moving. The leaf seemed to be nodding and beckoning to her. It was most unusual. She had been brought up to respect nature as the giver of all good things, and it must have seemed to her that the tree had come to life.

For a long time she stood watching, and then she saw that other leaves were doing the same thing. She came closer, her heart trembling. Then Lei Tzu saw that a tiny crawling insect, exactly the same colour as the mulberry leaves, was moving up and down the leaf and that from its body issued a fine thread.



The thread seemed to be endless. The more the insect moved, the more thread came. The Empress put out her finger and touched the thread. It was strong and did not break.

Presently she moved to another tree and found the same thing happening. Hundreds of the little green insects were putting out the threads. Then into her mind came an idea. If a little insect could clothe itself in a silk garment of such beauty and strength, why could not she take the delicate thread and weave it as the women wove the reeds from the river bank into baskets? She decided to try, and the next morning she went back to watch the tiny caterpillars at their work.

This time she saw that some of the little insects had entirely encased themselves in a covering of fine thread. How had they done that, she asked herself, and did all the little insects do the same thing? She decided to watch them. Day after day she sat by the tree and, as time passed, she made an exciting discovery.

The life of the caterpillar began from the egg and continued until it became a cocoon (the ball of silk) and then it emerged as a winged insect (a moth). She noticed how the insect first came out of a tiny egg, fed on the mulberry leaves and then, when it was old enough, wound itself into the silken covering. Ten days later it broke through the cocoon, mated with a female, which laid more eggs, and then died. What interested the Empress more than anything was the combined strength and fineness of the thread. Into her mind came the desire to unwind the thread herself and to try to weave it. For days and weeks she tried, but each time she failed. The thread broke or the strands stuck together, and the little cocoon was useless.

One day the Empress noticed that the cocoon she had chosen was soiled, so she dipped it into a pot of boiling water on the hearth. When it came out it was clean and, to her surprise and delight, the silk unwound without breaking or sticking. So

excited was Lei Tzu that she immediately ran to the garden to find more cocoons, boiled them and wound the thread on a reel. She then wove some fabric, and presented the Emperor with a square of the material we now know as silk. The Emperor had never seen such material. It was as light as air, as white as the clouds and as strong as the skin of animals. Immediately he called a council and showed the magnificent discovery.

To these simple people the shining fabric seemed a miracle. Each of the wise men had an idea how it could be used. Huang Ti himself visualized the production of fine, warm robes for all his subjects, of coverings for beds or hangings to keep out the cold winds. He made a decision. Every woman in the land was to learn how to make silk, and production was to begin immediately. The new fabric was to be made available to all, but he decreed that the secret of its production and manufacture was to be preserved in the kingdom itself. On pain of death no one was to reveal the mystery of the cocoon. To the little caterpillar he gave the name *ch'an*, silkworm and decreed that it was to be tended and cared for, since it was the giver of good things and a blessing to man.

That day was a milestone in the history of China. Within a few moons the men and women of the community were wearing their silk garments and enjoying a higher standard of living than ever before.

The Empress herself, not content with the mere manufacture of silk, applied her mind to a deep study of the silkworm. When she found that they suffered from a disease she consulted Chi Po and bade him make a medicine to cure them. Then she made a loom to simplify weaving and the production of silk increased so greatly that soon every member of the community had more than enough for his needs.

The discovery of silk was undoubtedly one of the greatest

benefits the Yellow Emperor and Lei Tzu, the Lady of Si Ling gave to their people. The possession of the fine fabric directed their attention towards better things and increased their own desire for a higher standard of living, and as the reign of the Emperor and Empress progressed, the people of China began to enjoy comforts which, in the light of history, were far in advance of those of other nations. And the secret of silk was well guarded until, many centuries later, it was discovered by travellers and taken first to India and then to Japan.

History has not recorded all the improvements in daily living introduced by Huang Ti, but because of his progressive mind, and his unflinching belief in a high standard of living for all people, the Chinese are still proud of being descendants of the Yellow Emperor. Fate had given him control of a wilderness populated by people little better than animals. He left them with a written language, a calendar, music, roads, carts, boats, houses, windows, cooking utensils and the wonderful fabric we call silk.

Huang Ti lived to a great age. He was probably more than a hundred years old when he died. In the later years of his life he devoted himself to designing bronze ritual vessels which would serve as fitting monuments to his era. These were known as *Ting*. The amazing old Emperor mined and smelted the ore and made the vessels himself, his last known gift to the people he served so well.

One of these vessels is said to exist today, and archaeologists are searching for others. These mark the beginning of the bronze era of China and the dawn of her civilization.



### CHAPTER III

## THE GREAT TEACHER

CONFUCIUS

(551 B. C. — 479 B. C.)

*In the Chou Dynasty*

IT WAS the year 528 B. C. Three lumbering wagons drawn by straining horses moved slowly along the narrow mud road that stretched across the wide plains to the east. Fields of wheat and cotton patterned the plains. To the west of the road the gigantic summit of the mountain Tai Shan soared heavenward until it seemed to touch the pale sky. The day was warm, and the land of the State of Lu, through which the wagons were passing, was

baked brown by the sun. Occasionally some relief came to the people in the wagons when the wind blew in from the East, covering the fields with a blanket of dust.

For days the wagons had been following the trail that wound endlessly around the base of the noble mountain. Through the stifling air there rose the pungent odour of the corn, and the thick, rich perfume of earth warmed by the sun. But the travellers paid little heed, for their eyes were focused on the summit of the mountain. So mighty did Tai Shan seem to their astonished eyes that each and every one of them was stunned to silence. They felt insignificant beside its majestic grandeur.

In the leading wagon was a young man of twenty three. He was tall, distinguished among the others, and in spite of his youth he already had an air of wisdom and dignity. His name was Kung Chiu, but the men with him who were his students or followers called him Kung Fu Tze, which meant Teacher Kung. Other people called him Kung Tze which meant Mr Kung and later the Western world was to know him as Confucius, the great philosopher of China, whose wisdom was to remain and be respected through the ages.

Confucius had been working for the state as a storekeeper and later was made a superintendent of herds and public lands. His heart does not seem to have been in his work, however, probably because he found that his fellow civil servants were small minded, ignorant and corrupt. So he began to devote the major part of his time to study. The position as keeper of the herds probably gave him ample time for this and soon his fame as a scholar spread and many young people gathered around him to listen to his scholarly discussions.

At twenty three he had a reputation as a thinker and teacher, and a number of students, rich and poor, had been drawn to him.



to learn from him by asking questions, and to listen to his sayings on government, art, literature and music.

Confucius was no ordinary person, and his life had been harder than that of most of his companions. Even the circumstances of his birth were unusual. His father, Shu Chieh, was a member of an ancient and noble family that had come from the North to live in exile in the State of Lu in order to escape persecution. Little is known about Shu Chieh except that he was far from happy in his old age because he had nine daughters and but one son, an idiot. Now, for a Chinese to have no worthy male descendant was not only a social tragedy but a dishonour. It meant that his line would not be carried on and that he would have no son to perpetuate his name.

When he was well past the age of seventy, Shu Chieh met and married a young girl of great charm and beauty, hoping that his family might be blessed with a son. Both he and the young wife prayed day and night to Heaven that they might be favoured with a male child. The young wife made a habit of visiting a shrine at the foot of the mountain Nichiu in order that she might find favour with Heaven.

One night she had a dream or vision. She saw a unicorn, the fabulous one horned horse, emerging from the edge of a forest. In its mouth it held a book of precious jade, which it threw at her feet before prancing away into the depths of the forest. Such a dream could be nothing but an omen of some outstanding event to come, and, as though to prove this, a short time afterwards the young wife gave birth to a son.

The family rejoiced through the day and night, singing, and playing music, and making offerings to Heaven, which had so blessed them. The parents named the child Chiu after the hill where the mother had prayed. The blessing of a son, however, so pleased Shu Chieh that he now felt he could go in peace to

join his ancestors, and scarcely three years after the birth of his son he died

Being of a good family with a long and distinguished history in the State of Lu the widow felt it was her duty to take her husband's body back to his native village for burial. She therefore sold everything she had and set out on a long journey. She buried her husband with all the ceremony she could afford and as befitted his age and station in life.

When she returned to the district where she was living, she set herself the task of bringing up her son. She had very little money, so little that she could scarcely afford to buy the materials for the child to study, and there were times when the family was without food and very much in debt. For three years she observed a state of rigid mourning out of respect to her dead husband.

It was from his mother that Confucius inherited his great love of tradition and ceremony. He proved himself to be a scholar above the ordinary, with a taste for higher thought and good music. He was respectful and obedient to his mother but he seems to have resented the fact that she did not tell him where his father had been buried. Some accounts say that she did not tell him who his father was but, whatever were the circumstances, the young man grew up with an intense desire to find his father's grave and there to pay homage to him.

Confucius grew up in a world that must have been rather difficult for a thinking man. Corruption and tyranny were rampant. The civil servants who ruled the land were dishonest and cruel. They preyed on the farmers levying unjust taxes. Every man's life was in danger for if he incurred the displeasure of the feudal lord or of the Emperor he was liable to be executed on the spot.

Confucius early became what today we might call a radical

He wanted to reform the world, as do so many young people. He dreamed of great things in the future, when good government and honesty could march hand in hand. He did not abandon his youthful desires, but continued to study with one aim in view: the creation of the ideal state, with a good, benevolent government and justice for all.

Around him he assembled a group of young people who thought as he did. They gathered together, living as best as they could and subordinating their personal comfort to their desire for learning. They were shabby, hungry and cold, but felt that the knowledge they acquired compensated for their discomforts.

Since they lived as they did, their lives were often in danger, for the rule of the day was that a man should kill or be killed, enslave the other man or be enslaved himself. They sought wisdom and a way to spread the knowledge they had gained. They believed that daily discussions were helpful, but these alone did not solve problems, and so they decided to travel out of the State of Lu in search of some of the wise men of the country and to learn from them the answer to their problems.

In those days wise men, unable to live with their fellows, made a habit of going into the mountains and living in solitude in caves, so that they could perfect their philosophies. People who wanted to question them had first to search them out. Some of these wise men enjoyed a great reputation, but since books were scarce and there were no sign posts, the exact location of their dwellings was rarely known. Looking for a wise man then was as difficult as searching for a rare botanical specimen today.

Confucius was undoubtedly the moving spirit behind the journey that his followers were making in their wagons, lumbering along the dusty trail in the State of Lu. It is quite probable, too, that the townspeople where the students lived were angry with them for spending their days studying and arguing instead

of working in the fields as did the others. So they all set out together in three wagons, to increase their knowledge of the world, of music and of the Chinese language, which was then well developed.

There were twenty of them altogether, drawn from all walks of life. Yen Hui, the most advanced scholar of them all, apart from their leader, was poverty stricken, with no place to sleep and nothing to eat. He never worried about such trifles as long as he had a book to study or a problem to ponder over. Yen Yu and Chung Kung were sons of princely families, and probably provided the wagons and the little money the party needed to buy food and drink. Among the others were sons of tradespeople, farmers and middle-class folk, such as Tze Lu, Tze Si, Tze Kung, Chu Lu and Tse Hsia. Like the disciples who followed Jesus nearly five hundred years later, they had left everything to be with this remarkable young man who knew so much. Learning, self culture, the well being of the common man, were what they sought.

The journey, we learn, was never an entirely pleasant one. Food was scarce, the wanderers had few clothes, and actually they did not know where they were going, except in search of knowledge. Confucius, who sat in the first wagon with Tze Lu, Tze Kung and three others, was a taciturn young man. He rarely spoke unless he had something important to say and would remain silent for days. His silence made his fellows a little wary of speaking themselves, so often they just went on, letting the horses lead the way, without even daring to ask whether to turn to the right or the left.

They had been travelling for three months when they came to the base of Tai Shan. This particular morning Tze Kung had been eager to ask the Master a question, but whenever he smiled or opened his mouth as if to speak, Confucius frowned to indicate

that he was busy with a great thought. Finally Confucius turned his face towards his companion and Tze Kung said, "My teacher, is there any one word that I may use as a rule for conduct throughout life?"

The great teacher thought for a while. Then he answered " 'Consideration' is the word. Yes, 'consideration'. Be considerate and you will not do unto others what you would not wish done unto yourself."

The answer gave Tze Kung something to think about for a long time, not only for hours, but for days. He kept repeating the words in his mind. "Be considerate, and you will not do unto others what you would not wish done unto yourself."

Whenever Confucius spoke, he would deliver some similar great truth, that was why the students clung to him so faithfully. The search for knowledge was then a difficult task. There were no libraries to consult, and few experts. What knowledge there was had to be learned by word of mouth. With Confucius, as later with Jesus, the people who were close to him wrote down and recorded his sayings, as was the practice in those days. Were it not for these writings the world would have little knowledge of its early scholars.

The party moved on slowly. Each man had his own problem on humanity, morality, good government or sound economy to reflect on. Presently they approached a public cemetery. As they came closer, they could see a person in creamy white sack cloth moving among the tombs. When they were closer still, they could see that the person was a woman, and could also hear her shrill mourning. The tragic sound of her weeping was the only thing that disturbed the tranquillity of the sweeping fields dotted here and there with a few trees.

Confucius told Tze Lu to halt the wagon. Tze Lu helped his young master down with proper courtesy and ceremony, and

accompanied him to the tomb where the woman was sitting. She was of middle age, and so overcome was she by her grief, and weeping so bitterly, that she did not notice the approach of the two scholarly men

"My lady," Confucius said gently, "please forgive my intrusion. But by your weeping you seem to be burdened with much sorrow. May I ask the cause?"

The woman looked up, her eyes red and swollen and her face tear stained. Confucius was wearing a loose-fitting robe that reached to his ankles. His long journey had neither creased the formal garment nor disarranged his head dress. She was aware of a dignified and courteous person who appeared to possess great wisdom in spite of his youth.

She stood up to return the stranger's bow. "Yes, sir," she said through her sobs. "My father-in-law was killed by the tiger from the mountain some months ago. Then my husband died by the same fate. And now my son." Her tears streamed afresh, and in piteous misery she tried to cover her face with her white sackcloth mourning robe.

"That is very sad, my lady," said Confucius. "But why don't you move away somewhere to save yourself from the tiger?"

The woman stopped crying, and fixed her eyes on Confucius with astonishment. "Sir," she answered, "I could not think of leaving. This state has not a tyrannical government as have the others. I would rather be threatened by the tiger than by tyranny."

Confucius could say nothing in reply. He bowed farewell and walked with Tze Lu back to their wagon. Silence prevailed for a long time as they went on their way. Then out of deep thought Confucius said, "You see what I mean, Tze Lu? A tyrannical government is more fearful than the tiger." None of them spoke again that afternoon.

For days the wagons rolled. The only subject discussed by the twenty students and the young master was: "A tyrannical government is more fearful than the tiger."

The simple woman's saying gave them much to think about. It proved to them that people would rather face death at the claws of a wild beast than endure tyranny of government. This spurred their desire to search for a means of establishing good government.

The next person they met was a musician named Chang Hung, who came to meet them, playing sweet music on a lute. He must have welcomed such a distinguished student body, for he played to them for a day and a night. He proved such good company that the students tarried for three months, asking him questions and learning his music. To them time did not matter. Knowledge was all they sought, and after they had been on the road for so many months, a halt of three months mattered very little.

Confucius loved music. After his stay with the great musician, he announced that he was so absorbed in music he had entirely forgotten the taste of food.

The great event of this tour took place when the party arrived at the capital of Chou. There they met the archivist or librarian Lao Tze. Confucius had heard of him before he led the students on the tour, and was eagerly looking forward to the opportunity of meeting the wise old man. The first thing to be done when the party arrived in the capital was to pay a visit to the archives of Chou.

Lao Tze was an extraordinary person in appearance. The story goes that he had been born with white hair. He looked very old indeed, as he had since he was a boy, with wrinkled hands and puckered face. He also had the reputation of being a

liberal thinker who disliked ceremony, to which Confucius was devoted

Lao Tze ran and leapt like an athlete when he moved about, while Confucius, garbed in his long robe, took slow ceremonial steps. He had dressed himself carefully to meet the great wise man, with his square hat at the correct angle and his formal robe wrapped about him. Lao Tze immediately showed that he was not at all impressed by this formality. When Confucius bowed low to him, he did not even bother to return the courtesy. Lao Tze sat on a big chest containing writings on bamboo slabs and the shells of turtles, which was the method employed by the ancients for preserving their writings.

Confucius did not allow this strange welcome to disturb him and he posed his first question. What was the distinguished archivist's idea of the best way to study *Li*? — which means ceremony or social order.

"*Li*!" squeaked Lao Tze. "If you want to know about the study of ceremony, go and open some of those chests in the archives and you will find your answer."

"But I should like to hear *your* opinion on this subject," said Confucius. "We consider you the great thinker of our time. You should know a great deal about this subject. You are the archivist of Chou."

But Lao Tze was a carefree old man. "I have nothing to say," he answered. "My work consists in putting the wisdom away in the chests, not in displaying it."

Confucius then began to express his own opinion. "Of all the things men lived by," he said, "*Li* is the most important. Without *Li*, it would be impossible to establish the proper relationships between man and woman, between parents and children and between brothers, and it would also be impossible to tell the difference of seniority in the family. That is why a



gentleman holds *li* in great esteem and tries to teach the people its principles and to regulate the forms of their social life. . . . When *li* prevails, there will be harmony in the world. Rulers will be elected according to their wisdom and ability, and people will not only regard their own parents as parents and their own children as children, but will extend their love to all. Old people will be able to enjoy their old age ; young people will be able to find employment suited to their talents ; the juniors will have their elders to revere ; and those who are helpless, such as widows, orphans and cripples, will be cared for. Men will have their respective occupations and women their homes. . . . This is what I call the function and fulfilment of *li*."

Lao Tze did not answer, but he must have respected the young man with the strange, pompous manner, for he allowed the students the freedom of the library to continue their studies. The stay at Chou, however, was not so long as the students would have liked. One day a messenger arrived from Lu with bad news for the young teacher. His mother had died.

Confucius, true to his respect for ceremony and proper observance of custom above everything else, immediately left for home. During the journey Confucius said to his pupils: "I know how birds can fly, fishes swim, and animals run. Yet the runner may be snared, the swimmer hooked, and the flier shot by the arrow. But there *is* the dragon ; I cannot tell how he mounts on the wind through the clouds and rises to heaven. Today I have seen Lao Tze and can only compare him to the dragon." He respected the strange taciturn old man, but he could not understand why a man with such great knowledge should refuse to talk.

When Confucius arrived home, he settled down to observe the three-year period of mourning customary in marking the passing of a parent. During this time he kept himself within the

confines of his home, lived simply, and refrained from music and conversation. To occupy his time, he set himself the task of tracing his family tree through eleven generations. Among his mother's possessions he must have discovered the location of his father's grave, for he made plans to move his mother's body in order that the two might be at rest together in a place called Fangshen.

The mourning period could not have passed too slowly for him, because it enabled him to accomplish a prodigious amount of study. Towards the end of the period he began to think what he should do when he returned to public life. Was he to go back to the department of lands and herds? The position held little attraction for him. During his three years of seclusion he had learned a great deal, and he was more ambitious for self-development than ever. A regular career as a civil servant appealed to him less and less, and though it would have enabled him to live in comfort for the rest of his life, he was convinced that there were better things.

In his travels Confucius had seen the difference between good government and bad. He had seen kings and princes whose indulgence in luxury and pleasure cost them their thrones and lives. Furthermore, those wanton rulers inflicted intense misery on their subjects. He had seen that good government benefited sovereign and subject alike. Never could he forget the simple lesson of the woman who, though her relatives had been killed by the tiger, still preferred the tiger to tyranny. What a wonderful place the world would be, he pondered, if all rulers were good to their people! Only if this could be brought about universally would peace and harmony prevail. Confucius saw this clearly and made a momentous decision. He would make a crusade of his life, explaining good government to all who would listen.

At first the task must have seemed a formidable one. It

appeared almost impossible. The rulers were powerful, selfish and brutal. They lived by the power of arms, taxed and executed their people, seized their homes, made war on one another, and had no respect for the commands of the Emperor of the Chou dynasty who lived in the distant capital in Shensi. How could a young man like Confucius dare to tell those powerful people they were wrong and show them the right way of living? Could a single man turn them from selfishness to unselfishness and show them the folly of stealing one another's land? He saw a way and set out to put the plan into execution.

He emerged from his mourning period and returned to his duties. Immediately his students flocked to him, and his fame as a scholar was even greater than before. Many things had happened to him during the three years of his seclusion. The State of Lu for which he worked was in chaos. Her neighbours, the States of Chin, Chu and Chi, were threatening to invade Lu. There were those in the government who favoured appeasement. They would sacrifice anything to peace and comfort, and advocated the signing of a treaty with their neighbours to the disadvantage of the people. Others wanted to fight, though the army was in no condition to conduct a war. In other words, the feudal state was in much the same condition as were many countries in Europe at the beginning of the Second World War.

The fame of Confucius was not limited to the State of Lu, and in the midst of war alarms and threats, the Duke of Chi sent a message to the scholar asking him to visit the state and give him his ideas on good government. This was exactly what Confucius wanted. He went to see the Duke of Chi and, standing before the neighbouring ruler, dressed in his most formal attire — a blue robe with long sleeves and a fur hat — he showed himself to be a man of few words.

"My lord," he said, "in government a king's conduct

should be worthy of a king, a minister's worthy of a minister, a father's worthy of a father, and a son's of a son. And good government always has a limited expenditure." The simple interpretation of these words was that if each official or individual did his duty and left others to do theirs, harmony would prevail.

The Duke was deeply impressed. Naturally he wanted to rule a happy state, because he doubtless saw the benefit to himself. He also may have thought that the State of Lu would be weaker if Confucius and his wise counsels were absent. The government of the State of Lu did not seem to have appreciated the genius in its capital. He promptly made Confucius an offer. He would give him a piece of territory, a small state or county. In it he could create his ideal government that was to form a pattern for all other counties or states.

Courts and corporations in those days were little different from modern governments and business organizations. No sooner had the Duke of Chi made his promise to Confucius than the news began to spread and the other officials heard of it. They were angry that a stranger from another state should be allowed to come to rule a county and be their equal. They immediately began to invent gossip about Confucius and to disparage everything he had done.

"How can a young man so pompous become a good ruler?" said one of them. "This fellow is a clown. He spends all his time in the observance of ceremony and ritual. He will have no time to govern. He talks but he does not act. There is enough trouble in your kingdom as it is, and with another state ruled by a man who has had no experience in government, we shall be worse off."

The Duke of Chi listened. No doubt he heard the same suggestion from other quarters, and while he admired Confucius and liked the idea of having a good government, he decided to



check and hamper the scholar. Every time Confucius wanted an audience he granted it, but he never again mentioned the grant of territory, and when it was reminded he made excuses. Confucius soon realized that he was not welcome and that he was wasting his time. Disgusted with the hesitant, weak-willed ruler, he gathered his students together and they set off once more on their travels. Somewhere, Confucius was certain, there must be a wise and far seeing ruler who would adopt his theories and realize that good government was for the benefit of all, from the ruler to the most humble citizen.

For many years the band of students wandered over the face of the earth as they knew it. They travelled thousands of miles, often in great poverty. The fame of Confucius spread, and the respect of scholars for his teachings was unlimited. However, not one ruler would put the scholar's ideals to test. Like all great idealists, he was considered dangerous. Prime ministers and governors attacked him bitterly. Although he never gave up hope of turning his dream into a reality, the philosopher became bitter over the constant thwarting of his plans. But this bitterness never affected his judgment. Instead, it brought a certain mellowness that subdued the anger in his heart and transmuted it into a fiery zeal and love of righteousness.

When he was fifty years old, the State of Lu invited him to return to its borders. The Duke offered him the position of magistrate of the district of Chungtu. The position was a minor one, with little honour and a pittance for a salary. But for Confucius it was an opportunity. He could begin his work there in a small way and watch it grow in importance. Some of his students were angry with him for accepting the position, but, good man that he was, Confucius saw it was his duty to accept. Thus he became ruler of Chungtu.

In a year he effected many changes. One year was sufficient

to show that his scheme of government was workable. Chungtu became a model state. Thieves were banished, and it was said that a man could lose his fortune in the streets and that it would be as safe as if it were buried in the earth under his own house. The Duke of Lu was delighted with the progress made by the tall, quiet man who had striven so hard for a trial. He began to shower honours and promotions on Confucius. First the great scholar was made Secretary of Public Works, then Minister of Justice, and then acting Prime Minister.

In six short years the State of Lu became powerful, well organized and the most moral of all the states of the Chou Empire. It was so powerful that the neighbouring State of Chi became anxious. A powerful state, people had learned from experience, could be a bad neighbour. Confucius was not a warmonger, but he believed in home defense to withstand aggression.

In one of his analects we find this quotation: "To rule a country of a thousand chariots, there must be reverent attention to business and sincerity, economy in expenditure and love of mankind, and the employment of the people at the proper seasons." A country that had a thousand chariots in those days must have possessed a powerful army which Confucius probably included in his conception of the ideal State.

The councillors of the State of Chi were wise and cunning. They knew that the State of Lu was too powerful for direct military attack and they sought to undermine the strength of their neighbour by other means.

One day the Prime Minister of Chi expressed his fears to the Duke. "If Kung Tse [Confucius] continues to be in office in Lu," he said, "it will be dangerous for us. We shall be overwhelmed."

"I know," the Duke admitted. "But it is too late. How can we remove the minister of another State without war? The

State of Lu is well organized and powerful. We cannot over throw it now "

"We can, my Lord," said the wily minister. "Where there's a will there's a way. I have the way."

"And what is the way in which we can save ourselves from being overcome by the strength of Lu?"

The minister came forward, bending his head close to the Duke's. He whispered something in his ear. Sooo they were both nodding with approval and burst into triumphant laughter. "That will put him out! We shall see who is the strooger of the two," laughed the Duke. Smiling into the crafty, cunning face of the minister, he rubbed his hands together and cried "Excellent! Excellent! I have never known you to be so brilliant before!"

A few days later, the Duke of Lu received an invitation to come to a goodwill conference. The Duke of Chi, so read the invitation, realized the good social and political order of Lu and wished to make friends with Lu. It was all very innocent and flattering. The Duke of Lu could hardly resist the friendly gesture of his neighbour, and he announced to his Prime Minister, Confucius, that he would go to the meeting in his carriage on the appointed day.

To Confucius, who knew the craftiness of his neighbours, it seemed dangerous for the Duke to visit another state in a carriage unattended. He felt that the Duke placed too much confidence in his neighbour. "When a ruler visits a neighbouring country," he said, "he should bring along his guards and ministers of war. And if he is attending a civil meeting instead of a military one, he should be accompanied by his civil ministers as well." The Duke agreed, and set out with a military guard and accompanied by his war ministers — and Confucius.

The State of Chi had made elaborate preparations, erecting



an altar and a conference dais on three high terraces in the open air. The sun was shining and the day was warm. Both rulers were attended by their civil and military aides. The two parties ascended to the highest terrace. The Duke of Chi bowed to the Duke of Lu, who returned his courtesy. Then followed a number of ceremonies. First each took an oath. Then a treaty of friendship was signed.

When the formalities were over, the social celebration began. The Duke of Chi asked the Duke of Lu whether he might have the privilege of showing him a group of musicians and dancers from various regions of his country. The Duke of Lu naturally gave his consent, and all were seated. The Duke of Lu and his aides sat on one side of the terrace, and the Duke of Chi and his aides sat on the other side. There was a moment's silence.

On the terrace below was a massed band of a thousand musicians. Suddenly the drums and gongs began to beat, and to the thundering sound ten girl dancers emerged, five from each side of the amphitheatre. Others followed, with banners and huge masks carried by colourfully dressed entertainers, marching in formation. The drums and gongs continued to play. Their clashing notes mingled with the sweet, plaintive music of fifes, punctuated by the rhythmic steps of the dancers and the flashing movements of their hands. Here and there, in perfect order, the entertainers moved with their banners and masks.

So much motion! So swift, so breath taking! The deafening crash of drums and gongs regulating the dancers' movements filled the ears of the audience with sound, and hypnotized their eyes with sensuous colour. Never had such an entertainment been given. The dancers were so graceful! The soft, slow movements of their hands, rising and falling to the shrill music of the flutes and drums, seemed to sway to its very depths the dignified audience watching in rapt silence.

For the Duke of Lu, it was a refreshing and novel experience. He had never before seen anything like it. His pulses throbbed, he felt light and happy. It was only by dint of great self control that he retained his dignity and remained sitting rigidly, as the occasion demanded. Except for the occasional smile that passed over his face, no one would have suspected how deep was his enjoyment of the magnificent spectacle or how dangerously near he was to forgetting that he was one of the principals who had just signed an important agreement with his neighbour.

Confucius knew that music could affect men like wine. He sat watching his Duke closely, ready to warn him if he gave any sign of not acting and behaving like a sovereign before his neighbours on the other side of the platform. He did not feel that the signing of a treaty was a suitable occasion for an elaborate entertainment like this. He began to wonder why the Duke of Chu had gone to so much trouble and expense. He sat very quietly, wondering, and waiting to see what was next to come.

After the girl dancers, there appeared a group of warrior dancers, carrying daggers, long and short swords, spears and shields. The flutes had stopped. Only the drums were beating, loudly and rhythmically. The warrior dancers demonstrated close combat, fighting each other in pairs with daggers, swords or spears. Their steel weapons glinted sharply in the sunlight. The groups of men flashed from one place to another at lightning speed. Sometimes they were close to the audience, the next instant far away in the middle of the terrace. Their movements were so rapid that their bodies seemed to have disappeared. All that the audience could see was the flashing reflection of light given off by the bright swords and spears. Sometimes the dancers were so close to the audience that if one of the Dukes or Ministers had leaned an inch nearer, his head would have been cut off by a flashing sword. To Confucius the demonstration seemed

overdone. It was very exciting, but the Duke of Lu did not realize his danger. He was enjoying it too much. Confucius was the only man in the Duke's party who saw it clearly. This was no show. It might be an assassination.

Watching every move of the Duke of Lu was the crafty Prime Minister of Chi. Whenever the big blades of the warriors flashed within an inch of the face of the visiting Duke, carving a vivid white bow of light in the air, the Prime Minister held his breath. Would the Duke of Lu flinch or cry out? If he did, he would lose face, and that was the motive behind the whole entertainment. If the assembled group noted that the distinguished visitor was afraid, the State of Chi would gain a moral victory. To lose face was equivalent to lifelong disgrace on the part of a distinguished person.

Confucius also was watching. He knew what was happening, and he spoke quietly to the Duke, suggesting that he should not move. Dignity and coolness he knew could handle any situation. His suspicions about the ruler of the State of Chi were justified, but this was a time for reason, not anger. He quickly advised the Duke of Lu to request his host to stop the dance.

The Duke of Lu communicated the request to one of his officers, who passed it on to an officer of the State of Chi. This officer ordered the dancers to stop. But they took no heed and danced madly on. Nearer and nearer they came to the Duke, their dance swifter, more daring, in its speed. The audience watched, hypnotized. Why did the dancers not stop at the signal? The audience turned their eyes to the Duke of Chi, who looked as if he were enjoying a joke. But he was not happy about it. At this point, it came to him that his minister's suggestion was not working out as it should. If anything happened, he would appear to have been at fault in the eyes of his own subjects, and to lose face was a terrible disgrace. Against his will, and

trembling with shame, he gave the order for the dancers to stop. Confucius, being a lover of ceremony, immediately asked the Duke of Lu to request the Duke of Chi to have the dancers executed because they had disobeyed the first order to cease dancing. This was done instantly, and the Duke of Chi was overcome with shame at having made himself so ridiculous in public.

The Duke of Chi later reproached his minister. "You have made me look like an idiot before them!" he raged. "I was outrageously humiliated! What must they be thinking?"

The crafty old Prime Minister of Chi was sure of his own strength. He probably had a great contempt for his Duke. Instead of accepting the blame for the incident that had caused the Duke to lose face, he merely said, "I have a better plan, a really good one," and smiled. "Every man has a weakness," he added. "But I suppose you would not be interested. You will go on allowing the people of Lu to build up the most powerful state in the world, and one day they will send their armies to destroy us and occupy our land." He knew that one weakness of his own Duke was curiosity. He knew also that he was proud and loved power.

"What is it?" asked the Duke, his eyes flashing. "You are a clever minister. Tell me your plan."

The Prime Minister began to whisper, and soon they were both laughing. "Ho! Ho!" shouted the Duke. "This is good. Your plan should work." And then, remembering that he was a ruler and all powerful, he said, "You had better make sure it will work, or else." The Prime Minister pretended to be greatly frightened, and bowed low. "It will work, my liege. I will risk my life to bring power and honour to my lord."

Under the treaty signed at the great ceremonial meeting, the State of Chi was expected to relinquish a portion of frontier land as a token of courtesy, which meant, of course, that in time the

State of Lu would grow larger and larger. But instead of sending his ministers to Lu with the title deeds of the land, the Duke of Chi sent a strange gift. A hundred beautiful white horses and a troupe of lovely dancing girls and a party of musicians were dispatched to Lu that the Duke might have the same entertainment he had enjoyed at the great meeting.

From the moment the gifts arrived, Confucius had a new worry. The Duke of Lu was so pleased with the dancers that he wanted nothing more all day long than to enjoy their dancing and the music that accompanied it. So enamoured did he become of his new diversion that he gave it his whole attention. When he was not being entertained by the graceful dancers, he was absorbed in the prancing and pirouetting of the magnificent white horses.

Night and day he had something to divert and enchant him, something far more amusing than government or his people.

Confucius was disturbed. He had only the power to advise, not to rule. Day after day the Duke wasted his time with his treasures. In vain did Confucius remonstrate. The Duke would only reply, "How beautiful they are! How lithe and graceful! Like a bow of fire from heaven! What a wonderful token of esteem our neighbours have sent us!"

Days went by. The business of the State piled up. Documents were never signed. The Duke lived for pleasure alone. His nights were all enjoyment, his days sleep, his afternoons he spent looking at his horses.

One day Tse Lu, who was the constant companion of Confucius, said to the Sage, "Master, why do we stay? It seems to me that it is time for us to go. I see no reason to linger."

"Do not be so impatient, my dear friend," answered Confucius. "The Duke is only human. He will return to the way of duty. I shall wait. The monthly religious observance is due. He will attend to pay tribute to Heaven."

The religious service took place. Confucius and his ministers were present. But the Duke failed to appear. Confucius knew then that he had failed. "All my efforts to build the ideal State are wasted," he said. "Where am I to find a wise and far-seeing leader who will avad himself of the true service of government? Where is that far see.og leader?"

The State of Lu again fell into its old ways and became weaker than its neighbours. The crafty Prime Minister of Chi had succeeded.

Confucius then set off on a long journey in search of truth and of a ruler who would adopt his principles. He was now fifty-six years old, and for thirteen years he wandered, teachuog and searching for an enlightened man. His fame was greater than his success. At one time he had more than three thousand disciples who travelled with him. Seveoty of them he held in high esteem, but never did he find a ruler who was willing to abide by his precepts. He had much to offer, and great experience. "It is not easy to find a man who studies diligently for three years without improving himself," he said, adding "When a country is well governed, poverty is a thing to be ashamed of. When a country is badly governed, both poverty and riches are things to be ashamed of."

As he grew older, sadness and resignation began to overtake him. Though he was famous and had many disciples, he felt that he had failed in his practical life. He was sad but not cynical. He continued to speak of goodwill towards man, and when he realized that his last days were approaching, he said "When a bird is about to die, its notes are mournful. When a man is about to die, his words are kind."

But Confucius did not live in vain. He was in tears at the thought of his own failure, but two hundred years after his death the great Han dynasty followed his teachings, and for two thousand years his principles were to be followed by the Chinese.

ple. China in 1911 repudiated the system of monarchy to which he clung so rigidly. However, his school of thought dominates China and the Chinese, and will continue to do so for many days.

Great as Confucius was, he was by no means perfect. He was a respecter of people in the mass, though he respected the individual if he was able and willing to acquire knowledge. Above all, Confucius was a royalist, and he could not consider government without an Emperor. Everyone, in his concept of the State, was subject to the Emperor. One's sole aim in life was to live and die for the Emperor.

It is tragic to reflect that Japan has utilized Confucianism to win the hearts of the reactionary elements in China. For years, the Japanese tried to persuade the living direct descendants of Confucius to go to Japan to bolster Confucianism and thus win over to their side those who follow the great teacher in China. The direct descendant of Confucius, however, lives at present in Chungking in Free China.

Only in his rigid feudalism did Confucius fail. In other respects he was a kind, considerate and farsighted philosopher. Because of him, the thinking of the Chinese people has been kept for two thousand years from developing more than one predominant thought — the philosophy of Confucius. The great teacher had forgotten one thing — the individual rights of man, as distinguished from the development of the individual.

Of the people he said, "You can make use of the people only if you keep them from knowing too much." And, above all, Confucius disliked and suppressed woman. He said, "Only a low person and a woman are difficult to handle." He compromised his love of his own individuality by saying "When a man of high station is well instructed, he loves men. When a man of low station is well instructed, he is easily ruled." One

of his disciples questioned him on the morality of this, and Confucius answered, "What I said was said only in fun," but actually he was a lover of important people and a rigid lover of ceremony. He taught filial piety, that sons should obey their fathers, that subjects should obey their rulers, and he based the entire success of his system of government on finding a "superior man" for an Emperor.

During his travels he visited the States of Chen, Tsai, Sung, Tsao, Cheng and Chi and the capital of Chou, finally returning to his own State after many years, an old and disappointed man. But he never lost the hope of making an ideal State. He discussed it to the end, and his sayings were recorded in four books called the *Analects*, which today make very good reading, because they contain so much truth, which one can use for one's personal life. He had also written or edited the following books: 1 *Shi Ching*, the Book of Songs, 2 *Shu Ching*, the Book of History, 3 *Yi Ching*, the Book of Changes, 4. *Chun Chiu*, Spring and Autumn, and 5 *Li Ki* the Book of Rites.

His failure was undoubtedly due to the fact that he could not consider a State without a king or an emperor. Such an idea was too far in advance of him and his disciples. He realised that the welfare of the people was important to the State, and that a good administration would bring harmony and prosperity at home. The rulers of the era, however, were too selfish and too fond of power to adopt his theories.

Confucius tried to make them see his point of view. He tried to show them that their power, the territory they ruled over and the armies they possessed would not enable them to live forever. Only their good deeds or their bad deeds would be remembered in history. He revered the memories of the Emperors Yao and Shun, who thought not of their own comfort but of others. He held them up as examples but for the rulers of his time, life was



few of them cared what the people who came after them could think of them. History had yet to be written, and they were not concerned with it. So Confucius, late in life, decided to live as he wished, to seclude himself, to write books and to record the history of the deeds and misdeeds of the past Emperors.

In character, he was outstanding. He was a person of great refinement, with a sense of humour, who spoke but little. He was also a public figure, an orator who spoke eloquently, choosing his words with care, and elaborating his ideas with great fluency. He was friendly to the people about him, and took the keenest pleasure in society. He was fastidiously polite, and punctilious in keeping appointments. When the Duke summoned him, he would walk rather than wait for his carriage, and when he entered a public building, he would go in at the main entrance and greet everyone present with due ceremony.

He must have been a rather difficult guest. If he thought the food was not fresh, he would not eat it, and if the mat was not laid correctly, he would not sit down. When attending a funeral, he was always abstemious, saying, "Whenever I sit beside a mourner, I am at pains to eat half as much as he does." He was thorough in everything he did. On the day that he wept at a funeral, he would not sing, when he mourned he would not listen to music, and if he met people who were blind, he would politely lower his gaze in sympathy.

Above all things, he hated people who chattered unnecessarily. For him words were precious. "What is the good of being ready with the tongue?" he said. "Those who encounter men with cleverness of speech for the most part make themselves hated. When I meet a man, I know not whether he is truly virtuous, but why should he show readiness with his tongue?"

He was humble about his own achievements, always seeking to improve himself, saying of himself, "In letters I am perhaps

the equal of others, but I have not yet attained the character of the superior man." His principles were *Hold faithfulness and sincerity as the first principle. Have no friends who are not your equals. When you have faults, do not fear to abandon them.* Confucius summed up character in this way. "The superior man is satisfied and composed; the mean man is always full of distress."

Though he had spent a life in the pursuit of truth and knowledge he sometimes accused himself of lack of diligence and perfection. He once said that what worried him more than anything else was that he had forgotten to cultivate his character, had neglected his studies, and had not always been able to follow the right course as he saw it.

He was not superstitious, and refused to discuss mythology, spirits and psychical prowess. But, so the story goes, the unicorn that had announced his birth to his mother appeared also as an omen of his approaching death. One morning, during a hunt in the country of Lu, a beater caught a strange animal which no one had ever seen. It was like a horse but it had a horn in the middle of its head. The huntsman who had found it considered it an omen of bad luck. His men brought the animal to the capital, where they showed it to Confucius, who was then seventy-two years old. The tall old man looked at it and prophesied. "This is the end." He appeared to be broken hearted that his time had come and that he had accomplished so little. "Alas," he said, with tears in his eyes, "no one understands me."

One of his disciples asked him, "Why do you say that?"

"Because it is true," replied the old man. "I do not blame Heaven. I do not blame man. All I am at is to acquire knowledge as best I can, and to try to reach a higher level. Perhaps Heaven alone understands me."

A short time before, one of his most trusted and beloved

# 班昭



## CHAPTER IV

### A DISTINGUISHED LADY

BAN TSAO

(42 A.D. ? — 115 A.D. ?)

*In the Han Dynasty*

ONE bright sunny morning in the year 42 A.D. there was some minor excitement behind the big red doors of the mansion of the Ban family in the land of Han. A servant came running to the quarters of the lord of the house Ban Biao, one of China's great generals who was living in retirement after conquering the territory we now know as Manchuria. The general hurried to his wife followed closely by his two sons. The family midwife

announced the news. A daughter had been born to the Ban family

The midwife had probably expected the distinguished father and the two young men to be disappointed at the news, for in China, custom had decreed that the birth of a girl was of little importance. This family, however, was different. Both the father and the brothers were delighted, and immediately held a celebration to which friends and neighbours were invited. It was the first time a girl had been born to the family, and her baby cries were to them as the sound of festival bells.

The general was a man of ideas. He did not agree with the principle taught by Confucius that a woman was of no importance. His daughter, he decided, should be different. To this small, fragile child he determined to give the same education as her brothers received. She should learn to read and write as well as be taught how to run a home, and the arts of weaving and embroidery, as were all girls of the period. He bestowed on her the name of Tsao, which means Brilliance, and decided to educate her himself.

The child soon proved to be as brilliant as her name. She quickly learned the classics and could recite them whenever asked, remembering every word of Confucius without an error. She also acquired great charm, and early in life carried herself like a distinguished lady.

With the passing of the years, the general's delight in his daughter increased steadily. In order to devote his life completely to her education, he asked permission of the Emperor of Han to retire from public life and devote himself to the task of writing a book on the history of China. The Emperor could not refuse such a request, in view of the obligation of the Empire to the general, and he allowed the old man to retire within the walls of his estate. There he lived in complete happiness with his

family and his books, passing the long days as he wished, with not a care in the world.

Paper had been invented about a hundred years before, and the general had a number of books in his library, as well as the ancient writings on bamboo slabs. Life was probably a little dull for the young girl who lived in virtual seclusion with her father, but she seems to have adapted herself to it. Every day, at a certain hour, she would bring her father an exercise for him to correct, and as she stood respectfully at his side, while he looked over her work, she would peep into the books on his desk.

She often noticed that her father was sometimes so much interested in the books that he was hardly aware of her presence. It came to her one day when she was in her teens that the world of books was a world apart from her own. Sometimes she would tiptoe out of the study and leave him to his thoughts, and he would not remember that he should have seen her work.

One morning she disturbed him and presented something she herself had composed. 'Please excuse me, Father,' she said politely. "Tell me if I am interrupting you in your work."

The general looked at her abstractedly and then his gaze sharpened to concentration. Almost unknown to him the child had grown into a beautiful woman, and he had never been aware of her, except as a little scholar. Seeing his lovely daughter there, he was ashamed, and conscious that he had been living in a world of the dead with his books, while young life was growing up around him. Though a general and trained to conceal his emotions, he gave a little gasp and then spoke to her as he would have done to a grown up.

"I am glad you have come to wake me up, my daughter," he said evenly. "I have been living with the dead too long all morning all the day before. Now I awake to see that you, my daughter, are young, lovely and full of life."

The little girl bowed "Thank you, Father. I have finished my composition." On the desk she put ten pages of writing, and stood quietly attentive, as he read. All the while, however, she was thinking how beautiful it would be to "live with the dead," as her father had put it. What did dead women do? Where and how did they live? How wise her father was to know such things! She would never be happy until she understood the mysteries he found between the pages of those piles of books.

If she had looked at her father's face, she would have seen him as he had never looked before. The austere and stately general was dumbfounded by what he was reading. As he read on, his amazement grew. He was trembling with excitement. The essay she had written was on women, on how they should behave under the feudal system set up by Confucius, why they should be obedient, and how they could lead good lives. It was as serious and original a piece of thinking as any that the great scholar had seen. The style was that of a master craftsman. If he were not sure there was no one else in the house who could have written such a piece, he would never have believed it was the work of a child.

When he had finished, he put the essay on the desk and looked at Ban Tsao, his eyes shining with pride. "My child, this is perfect," he said. "I cannot correct it. I cannot add anything to it. Not a word is out of place. Every sentence is a master piece. His tone was reverent, as if he were addressing a great scholar, but the little girl was unaware of the significance of his compliment. She had been brought up to think that nothing good could have come from the distaff side of the family, and hardly expected more than to have her work corrected. She also had a project in her mind, and she dared to ask a concession from her father.

She bowed her head and said, "Father, I am much obliged to you for having taught me to read and write, but I am ashamed

to say I am curious to know more. You have told me that you live with the dead when you are in the library. Are these books the dead? Are they about people, about men and women, instead of being about the theories and principles of human behaviour, which I have studied so long?" This was her way of saying that she was a little tired of having to learn the *Analects* of Confucius by heart, and would like to do more reading. But, as a small child, she had to maintain a respectful attitude towards her father, and dared not ask such a direct question.

Her father was not angry. "Yes, my child," he explained, 'these are history books, books about the Emperors and Empresses, about their dukes and ministers and their times of war and peace. In their lifetime, they had the power to suppress those who talked about their misdeeds. But after they had died, everything they had done in their lifetime, good or bad, right or wrong, was recorded for posterity. That is why Confucius said posterity is sometimes even more important to the great sovereigns than the power and wealth that they enjoyed in their lifetime."

"Who were the ones who dared to write about and criticize the highest majesty, the Emperors?" asked Ban Tsao.

"The historians, my child," answered her father. "Many of them were anonymous. Confucius compiled many of them into volumes. Then our own Han historian, Ssema Chien, who lived more than a hundred years ago, wrote a complete record of history from the time of the half mythical Yao and Shun Emperors up to the time of our present dynasty. He wrote of Emperors and their dukes and ministers of writers and warriors of clowns and assassins. But nobody has yet written the history of our own Han dynasty which has existed for almost three hundred years. It is your unworthy father's attempt, my dear daughter, to take up the task. That is why I have been burying myself in these books."

Ban Tsao was very curious. She knew that she was only a girl, and that she should not do such a thing, but she mustered up courage and asked: "Father, may I read some of these books? Sometimes perhaps?"

"Of course, you may," her father answered. "But you must try and keep them in their right places so that I can find them when I need them."

She was so happy! The thought of being able to enter the new world of the dead made her heart leap for joy. Like every other Chinese child, she had heard a great deal about her ancestors, but to be able to meet them in books was almost too good to be true. The day might come, she thought, when she would be able to write books herself and pass opinions on the great figures of the past. But — and she caught her breath — such a thing was too much to hope for. She was only a girl child. Outside her father's house she would be looked down upon and treated almost as a piece of furniture, as were the other girls of the time.

After she had gone back to her own room, her father sat in his chair thinking. His little girl was growing up and would soon marry, like other girls of her age and station. His forehead creased with worry. Perhaps it had been wrong of him to educate her. She knew so much, far more than the majority of old men. The secluded life of a scholar was not for a young and beautiful girl. Now that she was so wise and so well educated, it would be difficult to find her a suitable husband. The general knew very well that the average Chinese man would not like to marry a woman who was better educated than he. The more he thought of the problem, the more worried he became. His daughter, he saw, was a rare jewel. Never had he known such a clever child.

Could he ever find her a husband worthy of her, one with whom she would be happy? Try he would. For four long years



he searched, and finally he found a modest, intelligent young student named Chao Hsi Hsu. Chao did not come of a noble family like Ban Tsao, but he was a kindly, well behaved person who hoped one day to take the imperial examination for scholars and receive a position in the Civil Service of the Empire. When he was presented to Ban Tsao, he immediately fell in love with her, admiring her sweet, womanly nature and respecting her great knowledge. Never once did he resent her knowing more of the classics than he did, or the fact that her family was a noble one. Ban Tsao also loved him, and when they were married, she was at great pains to live up to the accepted idea of what a good and dutiful wife should be. She kept her home scrupulously clean, and only continued her studies after she had finished her housework and embroidery. In her spare time she helped her husband to prepare himself for his examination.

With good fortune, good living and everything they could desire, the young couple spent many a happy day together and were looked upon as a model of marital happiness. They wanted nothing better than to progress in knowledge and become good citizens and parents. Then suddenly grief came to Ban Tsao. Her father, whom she idolized, died suddenly. So great was the shock that Ban Tsao fell ill. She had hardly recovered when bad luck struck again. Tragedy settled on the roof of the Chao home like an evil blackbird. Her beloved husband was taken ill and died. Poor Ban Tsao! She was now in the worst possible situation for a Chinese woman of the era. She was a widow as well as an orphan. She who had been blessed with so many good things, had suddenly had the very foundations of her life torn from under her.

What was she to do? Custom was cruel. The rigid Confucian code of the time ordained that when a woman was a widow she was useless to anyone and should kill herself, when she was an orphan, she was doubly useless.

But Ban Tsao had courage. She felt that she could do nothing better than keep the memory of her father and her husband alive with her knowledge and writing. Now that she had no household duties, she would continue her studies and devote her whole life to learning. It was a bold decision for that age, and doubtless her neighbours had much to say about it, but because of her noble birth, they soon forgot the scandal she was causing.

The General had died before completing the history of the Han dynasty. His elder son, Ban Ku, was entrusted with the completion of the task, so Ban Tsao asked his permission to help him by doing the research and looking after the books in her father's library. Her second brother had left home to continue his military studies and follow in his father's footsteps. He was stationed on the western borders of the country which today is known as India.

For months Ban Tsao, in her grief, worked with her books, helping her elder brother. The day came when the Emperor called for the manuscript, to see how it was progressing. He found it interesting, especially the chapters on the House of Liu, the royal family. But when he came to the section of the book dealing with the first half of the Han dynasty of which he was a descendant, he was furious. The history recorded how his ancestor had fallen under the influence of an ambitious and rebellious minister and had done many wicked things. This was an insult to his ancestors and was too much for the Emperor. One morning an armed guard appeared at the door of the Ban mansion. The soldiers forced their way into the library where Ban Tsao's elder brother was working, and carried him off to prison. There was no freedom of speech in those days, even though the Emperor appointed a special official whose sole task it was to point out his mistakes.

The minister known as the Master of Impeachment was

supposed to have the power to bring the Emperor to trial for his misdeeds, but naturally, for fear of his own life, he rarely did anything. The Master of Impeachment in this case did nothing, and Ban Tsao's brother had no trial or hearing. Doubtless he was doomed. Later, Ban Tsao received the sad news that he had died in prison. She found herself more lonely than ever.

Studiously she worked on, spending every day in the library, and determined to be worthy of the memory of her distinguished father and her brother.

One morning when Ban Tsao was nearing middle age, the Emperor sent another armed guard to the Ban mansion. Again the soldiers tramped through the stone corridors to the library, and there they found the tall, slim, sad-eyed woman at work among the stacks of books.

Ban Tsao paled at the sight. What had she done? Had the Emperor decided to put the whole family to death? She knew she would have to go. If death was to come her way, she would meet it courageously. Her duty to the Emperor was that of implicit and unquestioning obedience. She told the soldiers to wait and retired to another room. She put on her best formal dress, combed her hair and made up her face.

After inspecting herself in the mirror to see that nothing was out of place, that nothing about her could be taken as a sign of disrespect to the throne, she went out to join the soldiers.

With dignity and ceremony she mounted the sedan chair waiting at the door. Soon she was walking up the great marble staircase along paths leading across the courtyard, to the main building where the Emperor resided. There she was placed in a room leading off another and told to wait. Presently a servant came to fetch her and ushered her into a large reception room decorated in scarlet and gold lacquer with massive furniture and marble pillars. In the middle of the room sat the Emperor.

When she saw him, Ban Tsao was overcome. With difficulty she managed to make her obeisance. In her fleeting, frightened glimpse of the Emperor, she had noticed that instead of wearing his official robes, as was usual for an audience, he was in his leisure dress and very much at ease.

Slowly and humbly, as was the correct procedure, she advanced towards the throne, not daring to look at the face of His Imperial Majesty. Then, with her hands on her knees, she bowed low till her forehead almost touched the ground, and said, "I am your humble subject Ban Tsao, and am at your service." As she finished speaking, she knelt down to give the "three kneelings and nine bowings," the ceremonial greeting of a subject to the Emperor.

Then she remained kneeling. But to her amazement the Emperor spoke in a most friendly voice and asked her to take a low seat at his right-hand side. Ban Tsao rose to her feet. Again she asked the Emperor's pardon and obediently stepped over to take the seat.

The Emperor spoke: "You have much of your father's manner and dignity, Madame Chao. I am glad my late beloved general had a daughter like you."

"Thank you, Your Majesty," replied Ban Tsao.

"Your father was a great man and one of the foremost statesmen of our dynasty," said the Emperor. "It was a great loss to us when he died."

"Yes, Your Majesty," Ban Tsao replied. "It was because of your kindness that my father had the opportunity to show his ability."

"And your second brother, and your nephew, his son, are serving their country well, conquering lands in the far, unknown West, and taming the barbarians and the Tartars. I shall yet thank them in person. But your elder brother — he attempted to

continue writing the history which your father had left unfinished, but he "

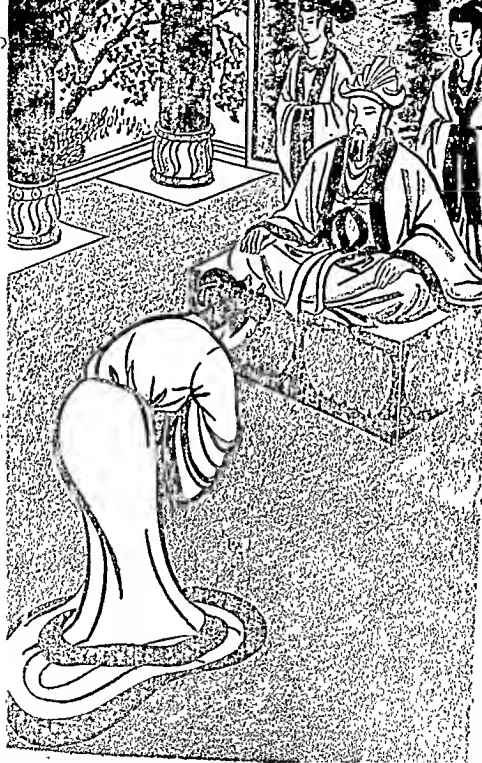
Ban Tsao's heart sank. The Emperor was trying to lay the blame for the unfinished manuscript on all the members of the family. It was not enough that he had put her brother in prison, where he died. Now he was apparently about to punish her for her brother's outspokenness.

She hastened to offer the Emperor an apology. She knelt again, her face to the floor, saying: "I hope Your Majesty will forgive my elder brother and his unworthy family. He did not know the great honour you had bestowed on him by allowing him to work on the book. I am his sister. I am here humbly offering Your Majesty an apology. We of the Ban family deserve many punishments and deaths. I await your imperial command."

She could never have guessed what was passing in the Emperor's mind. He, however, was proud of his ancestors, and had not forgotten the parts of the book which pleased him. He knew, too, that it would be to his advantage to have it brought up to date so that posterity could read of his own acts. He had heard moreover, of the wisdom and beauty of Ban Tsao, the daughter of his favourite general. He remembered that the Ban family had contributed so much to the strength of his own dynasty. Ban Tsao's father had conquered Manchuria, Siberia, his son had subdued the areas of Turkestan and India, and the elder brother had undertaken a book that was to commemorate the greatest of the family. There was only one person who could finish it. That was why the Emperor sent for Ban Tsao.

Seeing her prostrate before him, the Emperor realized the woman was well taught and knew her place as a humble subject. She would write a history as he wanted it written, the Emperor decided.

Rise, my dear Madame Chao, he said. It is no fault of yours that your elder brother wrote unwisely.



Ban Tsao rose to her feet. Again she begged the Emperor's pardon before taking her seat.

"It is precisely because of your elder brother that I summoned you here to day," said the monarch.

"May your humble servant know what Your Majesty has in mind?"

"Yes. You may. You spent a great deal of time with your father before you were married, I am told. You know how he worked on the history of Han, which is a good and useful project that means a great deal to our dynasty."

"Yes, Your Majesty. I had the privilege of being with my father a great deal while he was working on the book." Ban Tsao was beginning to be interested.

"I hoped your elder brother would repent and change some of the passages, and that he would then go on to finish the book. Unfortunately he died too soon. The book is almost finished, but not quite. Madame Chao, you are to take over the task. You will make the necessary changes that I wish and finish the book. I could not find a more suitable person."

Ban Tsao's heart leapt for joy. Never had she dreamt that she would one day meet the Emperor and speak with him. Now His Imperial Majesty was giving her a man's task — and she, of all lowly creatures, a widow! History was the subject in which she had been passionately interested since the morning she first saw those books on the desk in her father's study.

"Your Majesty," said Ban Tsao, "with great pleasure I will undertake the task. I will do my utmost not to fail you."

"Excellent, Madame Chao. You move into the Palace to-morrow. There is a very good library in my east study. You will work there."

"I shall do as you say, Your Majesty."

"Good day."

"Good day, Your Majesty."

Night and day Ban Tsao worked alone in the Emperor's study. The task was hard, but the book must be finished. The imperial library was a real treasure. Here she read books which she had never dreamt she would be able to lay her hands on. Her progress was slow and difficult, but her joy increased with every word she committed to paper. When the book was finished, she went through it again, carefully checking and re-checking the facts word by word, page by page, before presenting it to the Emperor. It was a great moment and a great triumph to Ban Tsao when the book was at last finished. But it was also a sad moment. It meant that she could no longer reside in the imperial palace. No longer would she be able to use the imperial library. The friendships she had cultivated with the ladies of the court would have to end, because she would have no right to appear in their midst any more. As she presented the last chapter to the Emperor, her heart was heavy indeed.

But what great joy it was before the audience was over to hear the Emperor instruct her to continue to live in the palace! Her task now would be to teach the ladies of the imperial family to read and write.

Ban Tsao accepted the position happily, thankfully. It seemed that Heaven was again smiling on her. Her life in court was exceedingly pleasant. Her lonely heart was lonely no more. She was given the title of Chao *Ta Ku* (Tutress Chao) and became one of the most sought after people at court.

There were some three thousand women of all ranks in the imperial household, headed by the First Empress and her ladies, many of whom were very beautiful. Some had good manners, others behaved like barbarians, and none of them had been educated. Even the First Empress could not read or write. It was Ban Tsao's task to teach them all. She began, of course, with the First Empress, and divided the others into classes according to



their rank and work. The Emperor insisted that every woman in the palace should be taught to read and write, even the chamber-woman and kitchen maids. She was also to teach them the *Analects* of Confucius and other classics, and to lecture to them on what a woman should do and know.

With so many women living together, life could not be altogether harmonious, especially as many of them had nothing to do but eat, play and gossip. Some of the Empresses were jealous of one another, particularly the Empress who lived in the Eastern Palace. She was jealous of the lady who occupied the Western Palace because she said the Emperor spent all his time there and never came to see her. Of course, whatever remarks she made were carried between the palaces by the ladies-in-waiting. Each one magnified the gossip and soon neither Empress would speak to the other.

The gossip continued and increased. The women who tossed the morsels of scandal about like tennis balls had nothing else to do. Their life was dull except for their incessant gossip. They were all jealous of one another, each tried to make herself as beautiful as possible in the hope of catching the eye of the Emperor.

Such a state of affairs could not continue without the Emperor hearing of it. He wondered why women could not live together in harmony and why there must be this endless evil talk and backbiting. For many days he pondered over the problem, and then he made a decision. The reason for the quarrelling and intrigue was that the women lacked character. They did not know how to conduct their personal lives. He thought of the quiet, studious Ban Tsao. If only the women in the palace had her virtues and behaviour! And why not? She could teach them to read and write. Why should she not teach them how to behave themselves? He sent for Ban Tsao and gave her an order. She

was to draw up a list of commandments for women. When it was finished, if it met with his approval, it would become the code of life for all women in the Empire

Ban Tsao went to work. She herself had noticed the faults and vulgaries of the ladies of the Emperor's household and had doubtless been shocked, but she had not dared to correct them. Now she was ordered to do so by the imperial decree. She secluded herself in the vast library and began to write her famous code of feminine virtue

She began her "Commandments for Women" thus

"A woman must act in accordance with her gentle and obedient nature." This is still true today, for woman is by nature gentle, although she need not be obedient to anyone but the dictates of her conscience

The rest of her book was divided into the "Three Obediences" and the "Four Virtues." The Three Obediences, developed from the teachings of Confucius, ordained that a woman should be obedient to her father before she was married, to her husband when she was married, and to her son in case she became a widow. The Four Virtues, as worked out by Ban Tsao herself from her long experiences with the ladies in the imperial palaces, concerned a woman's character, her conversation, her deportment and her industry

As to character, said Ban Tsao, a woman should be faithful to her husband. She should serve, love and be loyal to him. Jealousy was the worst failing of all. A woman should not be jealous even if her husband bestowed his attentions on another woman. Her duty was to continue to perform her daily chores and duties and to remain faithful. There could be no harmony in a man's home if there was a jealous woman under his roof

As to conversation, said Ban Tsao, a woman should not be talkative. A woman who talked too much could not be virtuous. There was nothing worse than gossip. Gossip made trouble. Where there was trouble, there was no peace.

As to deportment, said Ban Tsao, a woman should not dress herself for the purpose of attracting the attention of man but to be seemly for all occasions. An extravagant woman could bring a man to bankruptcy, and thus was the foe of well being. A virtuous woman would dress neatly and tidily.

As to industry, said Ban Tsao, a woman should first perfect herself in needle and embroidery work in order that she may beautify her home and nation. After that, she should devote her time to reading and study. But learning to read was a luxury, not an essential feminine virtue.

Had Ban Tsao known that her book of "Commandments for Women" was written not only for women of the Han dynasty to follow, but for all Chinese women for more than two thousand years to come, she might have added a clause like this: "This code is applicable only to women of the Han dynasty." Thus she might have saved Chinese women centuries of slavery and ignominy. But Ban Tsao lived in a period when Confucian teachings were at their height. She was praised and encouraged to write the things she did, and her "Commandments for Women" became an inflexible law for Chinese women, every one of whom knows her Three Obediences and Four Virtues. They learn them even today, though they refuse to practise them literally, because they are a relic of a feudal era.

Today, if you were travelling in China and met a peasant woman working on the Burma Road or carrying a heavy load with a pole on her shoulder, she would be able to enumerate the Three Obediences and the Four Virtues, though she might not

know the name of the woman who lived two thousand years ago and had laid the burden of this doctrine on her weary shoulders.

In many ways, however, all Chinese women are grateful for Ban Tsao's commandments because they put womanliness first. And certainly the Chinese man should respect this early feminine reformer, who patterned for him a national feminine character with few faults and many virtues.



## CHAPTER V

### THE GAY POET

*LI PO*

( 701 AD — 762 AD )

*In the Tang Dynasty*

ON A starry summer night in the Szechuen Province of ancient China a little boy six years of age sat listening to his father who was telling him a story. His name was Li Po and his father, Li Ko, was in the habit of telling his young son a story almost every night. As he listened the boy's eyes shone like stars. So much did he enjoy his father's stories that the day would not have seemed right if he had not heard one.

Li K'o had plenty to talk about, too, for until five years earlier he and his family had been exiles from China in a strange land in the West called Kokonor. Only when the Empress Wu Tse-Tien of the Tang dynasty had come to power in China were the exiles allowed to return. Li K'o had a vivid memory of the people of Kokonor and he knew how to tell a story.

The Kokonors were unlike any other people in the world, it seemed to the little boy, as he listened, wide eyed, to his father's stories. Never greedy, they were always willing to give up their wealth and possessions for a good cause. They were happy, and enjoyed life more than most people, because they were always laughing, playing and dancing. They liked fighting, too, and if they became robbers they robbed only the rich in order better to distribute the world's possessions among those who lacked them.

Li Po found these stories fascinating. Although he had never seen any more than the little mountain village in Szechuen Province where he was born, he dreamed of the wide windswept deserts and the great wilderness of Kokonor where his father had spent the years of his exile. One day Li Po would be an adventurer and roam the face of the world, living where he wished, fighting and hunting, doing all the romantic, adventurous things his father pictured.

But the father had other ideas for his son. He wanted to make him a good Chinese citizen. The child had a distinguished line of ancestors. His great great great grandfather Li Kwang had been a famous general in the Han dynasty, and every generation of the family boasted a soldier or a scholar. Li K'o felt sure his son would be an outstanding member of the family, so he decided to give him the best possible education. He soon found that the child was as brilliant as he was playful. At five he could read, write, paint and play the lute. By the time he was ten,

he had read many classical works and could repeat long passages from them

When he was twelve, Li Po began to show that he had a personality above the ordinary. He had learned so much that he forgot the Chinese teaching of respecting one's elders, and began to be somewhat unruly. One day a strange story reached his father's ears. A high official had been driving along the main thoroughfare of the town in his carriage. Li Po had dared to stop the carriage, hand the official his calling card, and ask for a position in the State government. And before the official could reprove him or order him to be whipped by his servants for his impudence, the little fellow had gravely handed him a composition of his own, written in beautiful Chinese characters.

The first line arrested the official's attention, and he read the piece. He found it excellent and marked by a flowing beauty that rose to an almost dazzling brilliance in style. Then he looked at Li Po and saw that he was only a child, so, with a frowning gesture, he threw the scroll back at him and ordered his servants to drive on. But the person who brought the story to Li Po's father remarked that the official had been astonished at the merit of the writing. 'That person needs more depth,' the official had said. 'He is too young. One day he will be a great man.'

The father was pleased, but he administered a stern rebuke to his son. Such conduct might cost him his life or cause him to be thrown into prison.

Li Po heard the official's comment and decided that his writing was good and that it was going to be better. He was convinced, too, that he was going to write poetry instead of essays. If officials did not want to read his prose, he could express himself in poetry. He began to spend all his time in the country, watching the birds and the beasts, and composing poems to the trees and flowers.

When he was seven years old, he had written a four-line poem that every Chinese child learns to recite at school today

“ In front of my bed the moon was shining bright,  
Offhand I wondered if it was freezing tonight  
I raised my head    There I saw the big moon  
My head is lowered    Where is my home town lagoon ?

He was passionately fond of nature, and he particularly liked birds. Every day he would take nuts and corn in his pocket to feed them, and the birds of the neighbourhood looked upon him as a friend, coming at his call, and settling on his head, shoulders and hands. Some of them even followed him to his house and took up residence there as his pets. Others came to live in the trees around his home and would greet him with song whenever he made his appearance in the garden. He liked all animals, and spent a great deal of time riding on horseback in the forest. In the evenings he and his friends would row on the lake in the moonlight singing the songs he composed in honour of the glory of nature.

Li Po was serious at heart in spite of his love of beauty and leisure. He and his friends formed a fraternity of which every member promised to follow the principles of knight-hood as laid down by the warriors of the Spring and Autumn era of China. This was the time when Confucius lived. Each learned to use the sword, to wrestle and to shoot and each took an oath to rid the world of wickedness and wrong and to be governed only by right thinking and conduct. Each was sworn if need be to give his life for his principles and each was bound to share his money with those who were less fortunate. Li Po however, was not satisfied to stay in the city of his birth. He felt that he must see the world if he was to understand life and people. Perhaps he felt that there was not enough evil to be put down in Szechuen Province which made the routine of the fraternity a little dull.



When he was twenty, he made his big decision With a bundle of clothes and books on his back, and a sword at his waist, he set out on a long journey, sleeping where he could, and always writing notes and poetry One of his poems reads

"Tonight I am staying at the Summit Temple  
Up here with my hands I could pluck the twinkling stars  
I can only whisper in the engrossed silence,  
Else I would disturb the dwellers of heaven

He had been wandering for a year when he came to the Anlu County in the Province of Hupei where lived a certain retired minister, Hsu Yu Hsi to whom he had a letter of introduction Hsu was reputed to be very wise and learned He had retired from work and lived the life of a recluse in a large house surrounded by a private garden His hobby was encouraging young people to read and write and study When he met Li Po, he was enchanted to find a young man so learned, and capable of writing such beautiful prose and verse He was a little taken aback by the young man's ease of manner and lack of formality but he recognized that Li Po was undoubtedly a genius and treated him as an equal giving him the run of his library and the rest of his house They became good friends

As the days went by, Hsu had only one worry How could he make the handsome young poet stay at his home forever? One morning an excellent idea occurred to him He had a granddaughter who was barely twenty years old If he could persuade Li Po to marry her, the young man would be inclined to settle down and stay with him permanently

Li Po agreed to the marriage, and for two years, at least, he remained settled Then, one morning, he packed his bundle and

set off on his travels again, leaving behind him his wife and two children and the sorrowful Mr Hsu. Like many other poets and artists, Li Po thought of nothing but his art. He was selfish, but he was prepared to sacrifice everything to his art, even to the extent of going without food and shelter.

For months he walked eastward. As he met people, he talked with them of the best ways of bringing happiness and wellbeing to others. He wanted, above all things, to impress the Emperor with the truth that good government could prevail only when the people were happy and well fed. He spoke like a reformer, but he delivered his messages in charming words and beautiful prose. Naturally his fame spread, and people were always pleased to entertain the wandering poet. Li Po, however, laboured under one great disadvantage. His father had been an exile, and had no official position. While he could reach the ears of the man in the street, he could not obtain interviews with high officials. This annoyed him and made him bitter. Birth, he decided, was nothing, ability was the only thing that mattered, but he found tradition was too strong. Without an influential father and rich relatives, he could not make himself heard in the right quarters, and could not obtain a position paying enough salary to enable him to exist.

For months he fumed and raged at fate. Here he was, a man who could write better than the average, who had the gift of poetry, who understood nature. But the rich and powerful would have none of him. He finally decided to mend matters by writing his own letters of introduction. He began to bombard high officials and notables with letters he had composed himself. One of them read thus:

" I, Li Po, came from the western part of Szechuen Province and have settled down in Huper Province. At fifteen I was a fencing champion and became the friend of many notables

At thirty, I am a writer so talented that my work matches that of the highest ministers and officials.<sup>2</sup> Although I am no more than seven feet<sup>2</sup> tall, my heart and ambition are equal to the strength of tens of thousands of husky men . . . ”

But the letters availed him nothing. Li Po did not succeed in getting work until 745 A. D. when he was more than forty years old.

He had then moved from Hubei Province to Hsiao Hsing in the eastern part of Chekiang Province. One day, when he was starving and in rags, he met a Taoist named Wu Yun. At that time Li Po was becoming greatly interested in religion. It was probably the fashion at that time because the Emperor Hsuen Chung was interested in the world beyond. Li Po had talked a great deal with Buddhists and Taoists. As soon as he arrived at Hsiao Hsing and heard people speaking of the Taoist Wu Yun, he paid the wise man a visit. Immediately they became good friends. Wu Yun admired Li Po's extraordinary talent as a poet, and Li Po admired the Taoist's wisdom and philosophy.

Shortly after Li Po's arrival, Wu Yun was summoned by the Emperor to the capital in Sian. When Wu Yun had gained his confidence, he began to talk to the Emperor of Li Po and his unusual talent. The Emperor Hsuen Chung was anxious to cultivate intellectual people and immediately invited Li Po to the capital.

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<sup>1</sup> In China, from the Han dynasty until 1911, there was a civil service system in which any man could take an examination to become a government official. The test was given in some form of prose or poetry, depending on the dynasty. In the Tang dynasty, the examination for the civil service was given in the form of poetry.

<sup>2</sup> The foot in ancient China was much shorter than the modern one.

Li Po could hardly believe his good fortune To be going to the capital to see the Emperor himself! All his life he had wanted to be an official and to serve his country. Now he would have the opportunity of doing so. He was going to the capital at the request of the Emperor himself. Possibly he would at last have power and be able to introduce the reforms he had in mind.

On the day of the audience, Li Po wore his best and most formal costume. He carried himself with great dignity. The Emperor received him at the imperial court, with his council and ministers gathered about him. Li Po gave him a humble, formal salute, but to his surprise, before he had time to complete the usual routine conversation, His Majesty rose from his throne, walked down the steps and grasped him by the hand.

Li Po almost fainted. The Emperor was greeting him as though he were an old, old friend, and told him that he knew of his fame as a poet, had read his works, and greatly admired them.

The Emperor's cordiality astonished the council and ministers. Standing there, holding Li Po's hand and looking into his face, His Majesty said:

"It is a great moment in my life to have the honour of meeting a poet like you. You are a plain subject without rank or position, I am the Emperor. I heard your name a long time ago, but I never thought I should have the pleasure of meeting you. This is the will of Heaven. If it had not been for our common interest in literature and religion, we could not have been so fortunate as to meet today. You will dine with me and the Empress tonight.

Li Po lacked poise for the first time in his life. He had always hoped to be presented to the Emperor and to serve him, but such a welcome astonished him. In a flash he saw good fortune smiling at him. Power and influence were his. He would be able to introduce his new programmes and reforms for the welfare

of the people. At dinner that evening he would persuade the monarch to give him a position.

Li Po rode to the palace in the carriage that the Emperor had sent for him. Servants led him along corridor after corridor through fragrant garden after garden, until he came to the imperial suite. Darkness had fallen. Above, the sky was like a velvet canopy, but everywhere the great marble palace was light as day.

Li Po had never seen such beauty. There were artificial hills and streams, rare and exotic plants of all kinds, brought from distant lands, nodding in the soft, scented breeze. There were great banks of flowers smiling at the new visitor. He saw carved stone pavements, marble railings, wide banks of steps, imperial yellow tiles and stately corridors with decorations in red and green. Such luxury, such harmony and tranquility he had never seen before. His heart seemed to be drinking the nectar of heaven. This was not life, he thought, his senses reeling. His eyes were hypnotized, his mind was enchanted. Only with an effort could he hold himself with poise and dignity. Very soon now he would be in the presence of the Emperor. He must control himself. It would never do to forget his manners or stumble over his formal salutation.

And then suddenly Li Po saw a smiling man standing before him, a tall man very much at ease in a long, loose-fitting yellow robe, with wide sleeves. It was the Emperor, without his jewelled crown, without his imperial belt, just a man like himself, only exalted and wealthy.

Li Po bowed as he had rehearsed so carefully. He had not been a formal man in his youth, but being brought thus, suddenly into the presence of the Emperor it made him self-conscious. He felt so awkward that he could not speak. Never before had he restrained his speech or his gesture. Now he was like a trembling peasant before a judge. When the Emperor stooped and put an end to his formal bowing, Li Po was still trembling.

However, this democratic monarch felt that Li Po as a poet was his equal, for that night at least. He did everything he could to make Li Po feel at home, but the poor poet was frozen with his own unexpected honour.

They were discussing poetry and literature, when the Emperor stood up and turned to the door. Li Po stood up as well, wondering what was going to happen. Was there someone more important than the Emperor? He could not imagine that. In a second he saw that there was the Empress. From an inner chamber, floating into the big room like a lovely graceful cloud in the summer sky, there emerged the most beautiful woman Li Po had ever seen. He had heard of her, this famous beauty, Yang Kwei Fei, who never left the Emperor's side when he was not sitting in the imperial court.

To Li Po, the young lovely Empress looked like a flower. Never had he seen any living thing with so much beauty. Her skin was smooth and the colour of polished ivory. Her body was round and well shaped. Her eyes were like dark stars in shimmering silver settings, her mouth was a tight red flower. He saw her hair smooth and black as rare ebony, with a jewelled pin in the shape of a bird attached to the ruby comb she wore. Underneath the printed maroon silk blouse the lovely figure was a poem of grace, her slim hips were encased in a long black silk skirt that swept to the ground in a languorous curve of beauty. As she walked with light step she reminded him of a flower swaying in the breeze. Never had he dreamed that such a woman could live and Li Po was frightened that the Emperor should have allowed him to see her. But her charm allayed his fears, and when she spoke to him he was able to answer with composure.

The food was served from golden plates and bowls. Self consciously Li Po ate with ivory and gold chopsticks, and thought of the speech he was going to make when he found the courage to do so. However he need not have been so uneasy,

for the Emperor suddenly announced that he was to join the Han-lin Yuan academy and would be welcome to spend his evenings in the palace as the personal friend of the Emperor and Empress. The Han-lin Yuan was an institution into which the Emperor gathered the most capable writers and scholars of the nation to draft imperial mandates, proclamations and decrees.

In spite of his power and position, Emperor Hsuen Chung was a romantic soul himself, and he soon came to love the romantic and carefree poet. After Li Po recovered from his first fright, he became an amusing companion. But when he had had too much to drink, he forgot he was in the company of His Imperial Majesty and sang and recited his poems aloud, swaying his body and keeping time with his chopsticks by tapping the golden bowls.

The Emperor soon found that the best way to make Li Po talk was to encourage him to drink, and soon, Li Po was laughing and shouting about the palace like a madman, forgetting completely that he was only a guest and a humble person in the imperial palace. The Emperor, however, would not hear a word against his new friend, but continued to spoil him. But he wanted Li Po to work, and often Li Po's work lay neglected for months.

One day the Emperor's chamberlain reminded him that he must finish a proclamation for the Emperor to read the following morning. It had to be done; otherwise the Emperor would lose face and Li Po might lose his head. Li Po decided that the only place he could write the proclamation was in the imperial garden. It was a cold day, the temperature hovering near zero, but Li Po did not mind. He sat down to write, but the temperature was so low that both brush and ink were frozen before he could write a character. Brush after brush he tried, but they were all frozen. Late in the afternoon the Emperor came to see how the work was progressing. He found the poet with a blank scroll and frozen brushes. Instantly he thought of a way to help his friend.





He ordered thirty of the ladies-in waiting to stand beside Li Po, fifteen on each side. Each of the ladies was to hold a frozen brush in her palms after warming it with her breath. Thus Li Po could take a pen from one girl and write until it was frozen, then he could take another. The proclamation was written, but the imperial ladies were displeased to be exposed to the cold.

Li Po soon became thoroughly spoiled. The Emperor came to his rescue every time he got into trouble. When he was too overcome with drink to go to bed, the Emperor would carry him to his room, when he felt ill, the Emperor would bring him a cooling draught. He even went to the extreme of tasting all the food that Li Po ate, to guard against the possibility of poison at the hands of jealous courtiers. In return, Li Po wrote poems eulogizing the Emperor and the Empress. He also produced several pieces of prose extolling the merits of the monarch's rule.

Naturally his popularity caused jealousy in the palace. The ministers and chamberlains were only waiting to undermine Li Po, but it was very difficult, because in the Emperor's eyes the carefree poet could do no wrong. But the day was to come.

One late spring afternoon, when the sun was warm and soft breezes were soothing, the Emperor was taking his usual stroll in the garden with the Empress Yang Kwei Fei. Li Po and his favourite chamberlain Kao Li Shub. Presently they came upon some beds of peonies and dahlias in bloom. The beauty of the flowers enchanted the Emperor and he ordered a group of musicians and girl singers to play and sing beside the flowerbeds. Soon the sweet sound of flutes, two string *chins* and gongs mingled with the fragrance of the flowers. The singers sang the old tunes from *Yueh Fu*. These were played on practically every occasion. The Emperor was tired of hearing them. The thought came to him that they were not good enough for the beautiful flowers.

"Li Po," said His Majesty, "write some new lyrics for the girls to sing this delightful afternoon"

Li Po was a little uncertain, but he was clear-minded enough to remember that composing verses was not difficult for him. So, swaying a little, he walked over to a desk near by and reached for paper and brush. He slumped a little heavily into the seat, rolled up his sleeves, and stretched out his legs. One of his boots was tight. "Here, you!" he called to Kao Li Shuh. "Take off my boots!" His mind was in a dream, he had drunk too much wine. He had forgotten that it was not the chamberlain's duty to serve an unimportant guest like Li Po, except His Imperial Majesty.

The chamberlain was offended at the unwelcome request. But he knew Li Po was the Emperor's favourite, so he bent down humbly and drew the boots from the feet of the great poet. Such a task was undignified for him. There were dancing girls and servants present. He knew how they would make fun of him for having to perform this menial task. Kao Li Shuh was determined that Li Po should pay for this.

Li Po quickly produced three stanzas of four lines each. He entitled it *Ching Ping Tiao*, the Song of the Tranquil Peace. In matchless verse Li Po described how, in the world of peace, the romantic and handsome Emperor was able to enjoy the company of the beautiful flowers and of his lovely Empress, whose unique beauty could be compared only to that of the Empress Fei Yen, the Flying Swallow of the Han palace five hundred years before.

The Emperor liked the verses but the Empress said nothing. Neither did Kao Li Shuh, the chamberlain. When, however, he heard the singers chant the lines, "The unique beauty of the Empress can be compared only to that of Fei Yen of the Han palace five hundred years ago," he smiled. He knew Fei Yen.

had been the favourite of the Han Emperor for almost twenty years. He knew how she had met a violent death, a disgraceful death. Kao Li Shih smiled as he thought of something he could do to Li Po.

Two days later, the chamberlain found the Empress Yang Kuei Fei alone. He brought up the subject of the flower party.

"I think Li Po is a genius," said the Empress. "Did you notice how quickly he wrote? In no time the lyrics were written. They sprang spontaneously from his memory."

"He is a genius, indeed," answered Kao Li Shih. "But I think he is a malicious, cunning, low minded person."

"Why do you say that, Kao Li Shih?" asked the Empress. "Be careful."

"I don't mean to be unkind, Your Majesty, but did you notice the line saying that your beauty could be compared only to that of Chao Fei Yen, the Flying Swallow?"

"Yes, I did. It was lovely," said the Empress. "I was so overcome I could not speak when I heard it. She was a great beauty. No single woman could have won the favour of an Emperor for so long a period as did the Flying Swallow."

"But she met a violent death," the chamberlain reminded her. "She had to commit suicide. And do you know why? It was because she was degraded from the rank of an Empress to that of an ordinary citizen. She was accused of having hypnotized the Han Emperor. You are not so wicked as that, but he implied as much."

The Empress Yang Kuei Fei sat in frozen indignation. She did not answer the chamberlain. Surely Li Po had not intended to compare her actions to those of the beauty Chao Fei Yen! But she was a woman. She remembered that Li Po was taking up too much of the Emperor's time. Her husband was paying too little attention to her these days. She had been gracious

enough not to object, because she knew the Emperor was happy with Li Po. However, this was too much. Like Chao Fei Yen, indeed! She would settle with this ill-mannered poet, and quickly.

Soon the whole court knew that an unpleasant state of affairs existed between Li Po and the Empress. One of them would have to leave the court, and Li Po's enemies laughed behind his back.

Li Po was apparently too happy or too busy eating and drinking to worry. He had been working in the palace for three years and he wanted to move to a better position. It would be a good idea, he thought, if he could take over the government of a district, just as had Confucius. Then he would be able to put his ideas on good government into practice.

He talked this over with the Emperor, but the good man did not want to lose his friend Li Po, who did not know that the Empress had turned against him, went to her for support. She listened to him and then reported to the Emperor that she did not think Li Po was qualified for a promotion; that he was a pleasure-seeker and a poet and would not make a satisfactory governor.

Li Po eventually learned what was going on. After having been ignored for three good positions, he realised that he would never be anything more than a court poet. The Emperor had changed towards him too. Li Po was informed that he might stay at the palace as long as he wished, but His Majesty spent very little time with him.

With a great show of dignity and a very sad heart, Li Po handed in his resignation and set off for his home. He had given the Emperor the excuse that he was homesick and that he wanted to see his wife and children.

He reached the town where he had lived to find that his wife had died and his children had left. He was homeless.

old and poor His home town seemed dull and uninteresting There was nothing left for him hut to tramp through the country. He set off, wandering from town to town, sleeping where he could, talking and writing Sometimes he was hungry, always he was thirsty Sometimes he laughed and sang, sometimes he was sad, weeping piteously Whenever he saw the wonders of nature, he would burst into tears The sight of the great mountain of O Mei Shan, with its blue white peak touching the roof of heaven, always moved him to tears

Life was very sad He was an old man who had once served in a distinguished capacity, but now he sought any position that would give him enough to eat To ask for work meant to lose face, to have no work meant to starve And always there was his wanderlust The urge to travel was as strong in him as was his desire for wine

Months followed, one after the other, and still the poet wandered The summer found him weary and homeless on the east coast of the Shantung Province He was writing and talking and charming the people he met, but he was unhappy Officials and well born people shunned him because of what he had done at the palace Gossip had magnified his misdeeds, and few people wanted to associate with him One day, in the market place where he sat in the sun writing a poem to the cricket, he saw a friendly face, that of a young woman named Ginling Tze She was cultured and beautiful and she did not care that Li Po was a rejected guest from the capital She saw in him the talent and fire that the Emperor had once admired, and she promptly fell in love with him

Happiness came again to the sad poet in whose heart burned the same white flame of genius that centuries later was to be rekindled in Robert Burns or in the vivid, sensitive Shelley Mellowed by the years, still inspired by his love of nature, he

suddenly found he had everything he wanted. To Ginling Tze he wrote a poem that remains a classic :

" While I was riding on a tall white horse  
Shortly after I parted from the Emperor in the capital,  
I came upon a carriage.  
Through its beaded-curtained window appeared  
The face of a fair maiden.

" I waved my whip in the distance  
And halted my horse instantly.  
Who is the fair of all the fairest  
Who seems to come from nowhere but heaven itself?

" To the green-gauzed door I was invited.  
With a cup in hand I sang to thee.  
Try you did to hide your coy little face,  
Then, bursting into laughter, you were coy no more.

" To see your face behind the fan moving  
Is like seeing the moon behind the clouds playing hide-  
and-seek.

Better not to meet at all  
Than to meet without loving!

" We loved at first sight.  
I can understand your heart is tight!  
Why waste your youthful years  
To regret it only with your tears?

" Time waits for no man.  
In the flash of a second our heads will turn gray.  
Remember this, my fair maiden:  
Love me, and don't delay. "

Ginling Tze was a sweet woman. She loved the genius more than herself. With him she went on long pilgrimages, visiting all the beauty spots of China. They were like modern bohemians,

carrying their homes on their backs, settling who. Finally they came to Kuling, a place so beautiful sight of it, even to-day, one's heart bows down in beauty of nature. To see Kuling is to wonder how world can be so beautiful. It has form and colour; it calm, and a beauty so vital that it has inspired a th writers and painters.

Li Po had not entirely given up hope of fame career, but when he saw the sweet, smooth beauty decided he wanted nothing else. Here was the p With Ginling Tze his poetry and his wine, he Kuling in complete happiness.

However, man decides but Heaven directs. Po enjoy playing pranks with Li Po, as it often doe While he was blissfully content with his hermit-li mountains of Kuling, a messenger brought him a d one of the sons of the Emperor, Yung Wang Lio. F of Li Po's great literary fame. Could the distinguish and help with his state affairs? Li Po did not want t knew that to reject the offer would offend the princ him new disgrace. Weeping bitter tears, he left mountains and once again became a politician. Scar arrived when the prince launched a rebellion to ove father and make himself Emperor. The rebellion i rebels were executed.

Li Po's life was spared, but he was sent into exile a Tze was forced to flee to escape punishment. Li Po v been executed too had it not been for the leniency of the Bot to have been involved in a rebellion was a disgra days. Li Po's life was ruined. His friends turned t on him, and he was again starving and unhappy with enough money to buy brush or paper.

Through the good offices of a friend, General Kuo Tze-Yi, he was recalled from exile. But, happy though he was to return and to be free, he was a lonely, unhappy man. He set out again, walking among the great mountains and lakes along the Yangtse River. Again his interest turned to religion. He sought out the wise men of all religions, of Buddhism as well as, Taoism, to discuss the great problems of the universe with them. Once he began to grasp the great truths of life, his mind was liberated. No longer was he sad and unhappy. He realized that character is greater than possessions. For him the tragedy of life was profound and beautiful. His mind was as clear as pure water, his spirit was so light that he felt he had triumphed over the ills of blood and flesh. Hunger and cold did not affect him any more. He was free. He was emancipated, wise and happy. Among other poems he wrote

"What left me was yesterday, which I could not hold  
 What disturbs me is today, which brings me plenty of sorrow.  
 Upon this lofty high tower I gaze  
 At the lengthy autumn wind blowing the wild geese south

"To write prose with depth  
 And poetry sonorous  
 Makes my heart leap, as my thoughts fly  
 To embrace the moon in the starlit sky<sup>1</sup>

"I draw my sword to cut the running water,  
 But the water keeps running  
 I lift my cup to drown my sorrow,  
 But my sorrow persists  
 Why live in this world if you are unhappy?  
 Tomorrow I shall

Tie up my hair and depart in a boat for Eternity "

<sup>1</sup> The Chinese believe that there is a woman, not a man, in the moon.



carrying their homes on their backs, settling where they liked. Finally they came to Kuling, a place so beautiful that at the sight of it, even to day, one's heart bows down in worship of the beauty of nature. To see Kuling is to wonder how any part of the world can be so beautiful. It has form and colour, it has peace and calm, and a beauty so vital that it has inspired a thousand poets, writers and painters.

Li Po had not entirely given up hope of fame and an official career, but when he saw the sweet, smooth beauty of Kuling he decided he wanted nothing else. Here was the poet's heaven. With Ginling Tze his poetry and his wine, he could live at Kuling in complete happiness.

However, man decides but Heaven directs. Fate seemed to enjoy playing pranks with Li Po, as it often does with poets. While he was blissfully content with his hermit-like life in the mountains of Kuling a messenger brought him a dispatch from one of the sons of the Emperor, Yung Wang Lin. He had heard of Li Po's great literary fame. Could the distinguished poet come and help with his state affairs? Li Po did not want to go but he knew that to reject the offer would offend the prince and bring him new disgrace. Weeping bitter tears he left his beloved mountains and once again became a politician. Scarcely had he arrived when the prince launched a rebellion to overthrow his father and make himself Emperor. The rebellion failed. The rebels were executed.

Li Po's life was spared, but he was sent into exile and Ginling Tze was forced to flee to escape punishment. Li Po would have been executed too had it not been for the leniency of the Emperor. But to have been involved in a rebellion was a disgrace in those days. Li Po's life was ruined. His friends turned their backs on him, and he was again starving and unhappy with not even enough money to buy brush or paper.

Through the good offices of a friend, General Kuo Tze Yi, he was recalled from exile. But, happy though he was to return and to be free, he was a lonely, unhappy man. He set out again, walking among the great mountains and lakes along the Yangtse River. Again his interest turned to religion. He sought out the wise men of all religions, of Buddhism as well as, Taoism, to discuss the great problems of the universe with them. Once he began to grasp the great truths of life, his mind was liberated. No longer was he sad and unhappy. He realized that character is greater than possessions. For him the tragedy of life was profound and beautiful. His mind was as clear as pure water, his spirit was so light that he felt he had triumphed over the ills of blood and flesh. Hunger and cold did not affect him any more. He was free. He was emancipated, wise and happy. Among other poems he wrote

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 Tie up my hair and depart in a boat for Eternity."

<sup>1</sup> The Chinese believe that there is a woman, not a man in the moon.

Li Po died an unusual death. He fell into the river and drowned while reaching down to the water to touch the reflection of the moon. He was sixty-two years old. He left behind a vast treasury of poetry for succeeding generations to read. His poetry shines through the ages, an undimmed light to help us to appreciate the beauty of life.



CHAPTER VI

THE PATRIOTIC GENERAL

YO FEI

(1103 A.D. — 1141 A.D.)

*In the Sang Dynasty*

It was a cold spring night in the year 1103 A.D. in a village called Tang Yin in modern north Honan Province. Old Farmer Yo, asleep in his small stone house, was suddenly awakened by the sound of a strange, loud cry. It was not the cry of a human being. It was not a fox, or the blood-curdling scream of a weasel. Farmer Yo seemed never to have heard anything like it in all his

life He sat up in bed listening, his wife, too, was awakened The cry came again, but louder, sharp and shrill, penetrating into the inner chamber of the house as if the creature itself were inside

Farmer Yo's wife was trembling "Go and see what it is," she said

But the night was cold and dark, and the old farmer did not want to leave his warm, comfortable bed "Oh, it is just one of those animals that come out at night," he said, turning on his side and tucking his ears under the blanket as though nothing had happened But secretly in his heart he was terribly aware of the strangeness of the cry and wondered what manner of beast had uttered it At any rate, he and his wife would be safe in doors, he thought

His wife was still sitting up straight in bed She was annoyed by her husband's lack of interest 'Here, here, wake up! she insisted her voice almost a whisper, so great was her fright "Wake up! Don't be such a lazy goose Get up and find out what is making that horrible noise Wild beasts may be destroying our crops '

Farmer Yo grumbling got out of bed "Very well very well, I'll go," said he, and he put on his warm, thick robe With a lantern in his left hand and a stick grasped firmly in his right, he walked outside

The frosty night was very dark A few stars were still twinkling in the sky Now fully awakened, Farmer Yo stood on the raised porch in front of the house There was not a soul nor an animal in sight He looked at the fields stretching far out into the darkness and at the jet black silhouette of the trees and woods He could see nothing He stood still and began to listen Then the cry came again and when it stopped, the darkness was eerie and blood chilling He listened, his heart trembling

In the silence he could hear the strong north wind blowing through the tops of the tall pine trees behind the house. It sounded like waves breaking in a storm at sea. But where was the strange beast he had heard?

The old farmer decided to search. He raised his lantern high above his head, so that he could see farther. Then he heard something moving. The noise sounded like the flapping of wings. But he was not sure. He lifted the lantern higher, and looked. Then, through the shadows, he saw an enormous black bird sitting on the roof of his house. As he looked, it took flight, the huge wings flapping ominously, and was soon out of sight. "Good heavens, what a bird!" he exclaimed with a shudder as he returned to the house and locked the door behind him, glad that it was a bird and not a wild beast.

His wife stood waiting for him by the window. "What was it?" she asked.

"Oh nothing," Farmer Yo answered, not waiting her to be as frightened as he was. "Just a big bird. And please go back to bed, or you will be ill. Remember, you are soon to have our child, and, you must be especially careful. They were soon both asleep again. But every now and then—Farmer Yo would wake up and wonder about that enormous bird.

The following day the farmer's wife bore a baby son and the good man was very proud and happy. The baby was a big child with a lusty voice. The farmer knew then that the great bird he had seen was a good omen and that their first son would be a great man. They had been favoured with a visit from the mythical bird *Peng*. This bird was such a giant said the ancients that when he spread his wings they covered half the area of the sky and thus darkened the world. It could fly right through heaven to the planets beyond.

Farmer Yo was convinced that the bird's visit might mean that their son would be as great a person as the giant bird *Peng*. With this comforting thought in mind, the farmer and his wife gave their newborn baby the school name *Peng Chu Peng*, after the giant mythical bird, and *Chu*, which means "soars" or "raises", both together meaning "the *Peng* bird soars". They also gave the baby another name, *Fei*, which means "fly".

Old Farmer Yo was a soft spoken, modest little man. He had inherited the two hundred *mows* of land from his father, and his father in turn from his father. It was a strip of reddish gray soil in the village of Tang Yin on the north bank of the Yellow River, which, for thousands of years, had menaced the inhabitants with flood, famine and destruction. The old farmer took his fortune and misfortune philosophically. If there should be a flood, it was Heaven's will, over which human beings have no control. If the people were blessed with good times and abundant harvests, they should store away as much grain and food as possible against a rainy day. With this simple philosophy he worked dutifully in his fields, not only to feed his own family, but to be able to help his less fortunate neighbours when they might need his help.

His wife, the daughter of one of the elders of the village, was a dutiful person. She did her work in the house and tended the fields with her husband. The arrival of their first son seemed to complete their simple happiness.

When Yo Fei was barely a month old, the dike of the Yellow River burst and the whole Tang Yin region was covered with water. The inside of the Yo's little home was flooded. The young mother, clutching her baby to her bosom, had to stand on the table while Farmer Yo went up and down the ladder, carrying their important belongings away to the attic. And every hour the tide rose higher.

It looked as though the whole house would be covered by the surging waters. Old Farmer Yo knew they were in great danger this time. They could not go to their neighbours for shelter because they were in the same plight. Being a farmer, Yo had no boat or anything that would float and enable him to save himself and his wife and child. He therefore carried them to the attic, but the water was still rising. If it rose a few more feet, they would all be drowned. Then he saw something that gave him an idea. A big, empty wine jar was floating on the water. The jar was not big enough to hold all three of them, but it would carry his wife and baby. He put them in it and, struggling in the water, quickly managed to push it outside the door. Then he embraced his wife, kissed the baby good bye and gave the jar another push, watching it float away on the flood tide at the mercy of the sweeping wind and the currents. It was the only way. And thus, with only a blanket to keep her warm and a little food, Yo's wife and her infant child sailed to a destiny unknown.

The sky was clear, the sun was warm, but the wind was blowing fiercely and the little woman in the wine jar wept bitterly. Fear clutched her heart. Every instant she feared lest the wine jar should overturn. Her mind leaped back to her home and her husband. Would she ever see him again? She thought of her home — of all the work and toil they had put into their fields, of their small savings, of the house that had been their home since their marriage, all would be destroyed. How long would this terrible flood last? She wept bitterly, but it only made her grow tired, and she fell into a coma. The baby, crying loudly, brought her back to reality. The jar was still afloat.

Near her drifted chairs and tables and household goods to which people were clinging for their lives. Fate was kind to her, she felt, when compared with the others in the water. She was



dry and fairly warm. As long as the wine jar kept floating, there was hope. The tide would have to recede sometime.

The flood was so violent that she realized it might last for days or even weeks. When the sun went down, she wrapped herself and the baby in the blanket, and snuggled down so as to keep at the bottom of the jar for the night.

Suddenly there came a severe jolt as if the jar were about to overturn. The mother and her child were thrown against the side of the jar. Terrified, she raised her head above the top. The wind was blowing violently, but it was too dark to see through the misty blanket of the night. She could still hear the water lapping against the sides, and occasionally people crying for help. Too weak, too frightened to move, she decided to wait for the dawn.

The next morning the little mother was awakened by people talking near the jar. In some miraculous way, it had finally settled on the upper bank of the river. She had been discovered by some fishermen about to start their day's work. They asked her where she was from, and when she told them, they were so surprised that they felt she was favoured by Heaven. One of the fishermen took her to his home and set out in his boat to look for her husband. Months later, after the floods had subsided, the fisherman took her and her baby home, where Farmer Yo was safe and sound.

After the flood, a grievous famine fell on the village of Tang Ying. Farmer Yo and his family had enough food to last them throughout the winter, but many of the other people had lost everything and were starving and dying in the cold weather. The streets were full of beggars and of those who had died of starvation. Old Farmer Yo was a kind hearted man. He could not bear the sight or the idea of other people starving and dying.

while he and his family had food, so one day he told his wife that he was going to share his store of food with his neighbours, to keep them alive till spring.

His wife was frightened at such generosity. If they gave away their food, they would not have enough for themselves and would starve. "My dear wife," said Farmer Yo, "the question is whether we shall have three meals a day every day while the others starve and die, or whether we shall have one meal a day and share the rest with our neighbours in order that they may all live." His wife could not argue with such a brave, generous husband, and so Yo's family shared all they had with their neighbours and lived as sparsely as the others for the rest of the winter.

Yo Fei grew up to be a fine, bright child. He had the muscles and build of a wrestler when he was eleven years old. His maternal grandfather Yao, an elder in the village, wanted him to be a champion, and engaged the best instructor in the country to teach Yo Fei Chinese wrestling. Yo Fei quickly learned all that the instructor knew, and soon no opponent could match him.

He was also an ambitious child, and eager to read and study. For generations the Yo family had been farmers. But Yo Fei was not content merely to learn about farm implements. He wanted more knowledge; he wanted to read books and to write poetry. He taught himself to read and write and memorized the classics. He read every book he could find. His mother sometimes caught him reading into the small hours of the night and was angry because they were now very poor and could not afford to buy candles for reading. Yo Fei, however, was not to be discouraged. He knew that he could get what he wanted by trying. He took an axe and went out to the forest, chopped down big trees and hauled them back to the house. Every night after dark

he would build a big fire with the wood and read by its light. By the time he was fifteen, he had read every book he could lay his hands on

Farmer Yo was getting old. He decided he would like to see his son married before he closed his eyes to join his ancestors. When Yo Fei was sixteen, therefore, his father married him to the daughter of their neighbour Li. The following year a son, Yo Yuen, was born to the young couple, and the old farmer and his wife were very happy.

But marriage could not stop Yo Fei from making further progress in his studies and in physical prowess. At nineteen he was like a grown man. He could pull a bow string of great strength and lift tremendous weights. The fame of his unusual strength spread throughout the country.

One day a famous archer named Chao Tung came to visit the village of Tang Yin. He had heard of the unusual strength of the nineteen year old Yo Fei and wanted to teach the young man all he knew about archery. Chao Tung was an expert with the bow and arrow. He could hit a target shooting not only from the front, but from the right and left, in a fraction of a second.

Soon Yo Fei was as adept as his teacher, and now Chao Tung decided to stay in the village to teach his pupil till he died. Yo Fei mourned Chao Tung's death as if he had been a parent. On the first and fifteenth days of every month, he would pay a visit to the tomb of his beloved instructor. One day his father noticed that almost all of Yo Fei's winter clothing was gone, and wondered why, but said nothing to his son.

On the first day of the next month, old Farmer Yo saw his son walking out of the house with a parcel under his arm. He followed him and saw him go in to a pawnshop and come out without the parcel. He followed him farther. The young man bought meat and wine and took them to the cemetery, where

he knelt before the tomb of Chao Tung, at which he offered the food and drink, in accordance with the custom of the time. Hiding behind the bushes, the father saw his son take the bow which Chao Tung had given him and shoot three arrows into the air, one at the front, one at the right and the last at the left. Tears came to the old man's eyes when he saw this faithful, loving gesture on the part of his son to his dead teacher. He could not help calling his son's name from his hiding place. The old man asked Yo Fei the reason for his fine gesture to the dead. Yo Fei said: "My father, Teacher Chao was very good to me. He is dead now, and while he was alive I did nothing to show my gratitude. That is why I come here twice a month to pay him my respects."

"But why did you shoot three arrows into the air?" his father asked.

"That was to remind myself that my skill in archery is due entirely to Teacher Chao," the son replied.

"Then why did you pour out the wine and bury the meat?" his father asked again. "Meat and wine are scarce enough these days."

"Because I do not want to enjoy the food that Teacher Chao should be enjoying," the young man answered.

The old father was touched by his son's deep sentiment. He patted the young man gently on the back. "My son, I will not stop you from giving this offering to your dead teacher. But remember this, young man: when the time comes, you will have to make use of all you have learned for your fatherland, and to be ready to die for it if need be."

Yo Fei stood up very straight like a soldier, and bowed. "Father, with your permission, I will certainly do my best."

Yo Fei's father had good reason to exhort his son to make use of all he had learned for his fatherland, and to be ready to

die if necessary. The chief of a tribe of people of mixed Korean and Manchurian blood had occupied the three northeastern provinces of Manchuria which were under the mandate of the Sung dynasty, and had crowned himself Emperor in the year 1115 A.D., when Yo Fei was twelve years old. This Emperor, whose dynasty is known as Tsin, was ambitious, and aspired not only to conquer the neighbouring Manchurian tribe of Liao, but also to overthrow the empire of the Sung dynasty.

The capital of the Sung dynasty, Kaifeng in Honan Province, was not far from the borders of the northern tribes of both Tsin and Liao. The threat of war was imminent. The Sung dynasty was busy organizing the internal administration of the country and was not militarily prepared to ward off invasion. To play for time, the Emperor and his ministers of the Sung dynasty decided to make a peace treaty with the Tsin dynasty and sacrifice Liao to his ambitions. This was done. But when Liao was conquered Tsin had become more powerful and a greater menace to the Sung dynasty than ever before.

Already the Sung dynasty was recruiting young men to repel a possible invasion either by the armies of Tsin or by organized bands of robbers who were terrorizing the country's frontiers.

One day a government official arrived in the village where Yo Fei lived, and posted a notice issued by the country of Hsiang Chow, calling for volunteers. Yo Fei enlisted immediately, and because of his strength and skill he was made an officer at once, and given the task of wiping out a large force of bandits threatening the community.

Yo Fei asked for a hundred cavalrymen to accomplish the mission, but received only two hundred infantrymen, though the bandits threatening the frontier of the country were some three thousand strong. Yo Fei was only twenty years old, but he was a good strategist. He realized that his two hundred men

were no match for the three thousand bandits, no matter how brave they were. He would have to discover some method other than direct assault to conquer the powerful enemy. He ordered fifty of his men, dressed as civilians, to penetrate the bandit zone as itinerant merchants. As Yo Fei had expected, the fifty "merchants" were captured and robbed by the bandits, who made them their servants.

Yo Fei waited for a while to allow the captured civilians to acclimatize themselves. Then he sent a hundred men to conceal themselves at the foot of the fortress of the bandits under cover of darkness. At dawn the next day he led fifty mounted men to attack the fortress. The bandits saw the fifty approaching. Such a small number, they thought, would give them little trouble. They mounted their horses, opened the gate of the fortress, and galloped furiously down to meet the attackers. Yo Fei and his men immediately retreated, pretending to be overwhelmed by the huge numbers of their enemies. The bandits gave chase right to the foot of the hill, where Yo Fei's hundred remaining men were waiting in ambush. They immediately attacked the outlaws.

Meanwhile the fifty "merchants" inside the fortress captured the two bandit chiefs and fought their way out through the rearguard of the bandits to join Yo Fei and his troops. Within a short time Yo Fei and his men had gained a complete victory over the foe with very small losses. Later that day the young commander handed over the two bandit chiefs in chains to the governor, who immediately ordered that he be promoted.

While the victory was being celebrated, bad news came for the brave young man. His father had died. Yo Fei knew that his duty was to return home and observe the three year period of mourning. He asked to be relieved of his military duties and went home.

Yo Fei's mourning period proved to be three of the most eventful years in the history of China. While the brilliant young soldier was confined to the house, fasting and praying, the land was being overrun by bandits, and the Tsin invaders were pushing steadily towards the capital, burning and destroying everything as they advanced. The day came when the Emperor of Sung and his crown prince were made prisoners by the forces of Tsin and carried back across the Yellow River.

Yo Fei's mother was aware of the meaning of these events. She had great respect for her son's ability. One morning she came to him as he sat meditating in his white sackcloth.

"My son," she said, "it is time you took up your duties and joined the national army. The country needs a man like you."

Yo Fei was very much shocked. "Mother, you know I cannot do that. I am mourning my distinguished parent. There is a long period ahead during which I must pay him respect."

"The nation is in danger," replied his mother. "Your mourning can wait."

But Yo Fei turned his back on her and would not listen.

His mother, however, was a persistent woman. Every day she would tell her son what was happening in the outside world. Finally Yo Fei said, "But, Mother, I cannot go to the wars. You are old and a widow. Who will care for you?"

"Heaven will care for me," answered his mother. "Your country needs you more. Remember this: without the home, there can be no nation. Your duty is to your Emperor. Serving the Emperor is more important than serving me."

Still Yo Fei would not agree.

The next morning she came to him and said, "My son, you consider yourself a filial son. Is that not so?"

Yo Fei bowed in assent. He was proud that he knew just how to observe the ancient customs, and was meticulous in matters that concerned the family.

"Then listen to me," said his mother sternly. "If you are as filial as you say you are, you know you must obey your parents. Therefore, be obedient to my orders. I order you to go immediately to join the national army."

Yo Fei was stunned. He had never imagined that his mother could speak to him like this, and he could find no way to avoid obeying her. He promised to consider her point of view, and sat weeping through the night. In the morning he came to her, bowed to her as he would have done to his father, and said he was going to join the army. His mother was determined that he must never forget his duty. "Take off your shirt," she ordered her son, "and kneel down." Yo Fei obediently knelt before her bare to the waist, his powerful muscles like bands of iron. His mother took a knife and heated it in the fire. On his back she tattooed the words *Chung Chung Pao Kuo* — "Do Your Best for Your Country." When she had finished, Yo Fei saluted her and left.

A few months later he was appointed a commanding officer under General Chung Chieh. The task ahead was to rescue the new Emperor, Kao Chung, whose forces were then encircled in Hsiang Chow on the north bank of the Yellow River. After a number of engagements the Emperor was dramatically rescued, he and his cabinet crossing the frozen Yellow River under cover of darkness, even though the spears of the enemy guarded the banks. The party reached Nanking, where the Emperor was crowned. In Chinese history this event marks the beginning of the southern Sung dynasty.

After escorting his Emperor to safety, Yo Fei returned to the front to take part in the campaign to defeat the powerful foe General Chung knew of his skill as a fighter, but he hesitated to make him a full general because of his youth. Yo Fei, however, was as courageous in his speech as in deeds. He was in



*fact, a revolutionary in military tactics as well as a natural strategist*

General Chung addressed him thus before members of a conference of generals and aides "Yo Fei, you are a good soldier, as good as many of our generals in history, but you like to fight in open plains, which is bad tactics. You must try and learn other methods. I trust you here, take my battle plans and study them."

The old general thus saved his own face. What he wanted was Yo Fei's advice, and he got it. Within a short time Yo Fei came to his tent. "Using charts to arrange troops is nonsense, sir," he began. "Times have changed. The only way to fight an army is to work on a general plan of strategy and adapt your tactics to circumstances. You need good officers in the field. Sound judgment is worth more than all the maps and charts in the world."

General Chung might have ordered the daring young man's head to be cut off if he had not felt that he could learn something himself. The idea of planning a battle on paper was an ancient and respected custom, but this young giant might be worth listening to.

"Why do you say these charts are useless?" he asked. "You speak rashly for a young man."

"Arraying your troops according to a chart is an old fashioned method known to the enemy as well as to us," said Yo Fei. "It would be better if every officer and every man were told what tactics to employ and, beyond that, were allowed to use his own judgment. The enemy cannot look into men's minds or hearts, but he can read charts."

General Chung was amazed, but he realized the young man was voicing a constructive thought. The established patterns of battle order were known to all sides, as were the manoeuvres.

to counter them. The general appreciated the fact that if he used his troops in unfamiliar patterns, the enemy might be confused and more easily defeated. But when he presented the idea to his staff they were sceptical, especially when Yo Fei proposed an immediate attack on the capital to rescue the old Emperor. If they could keep the enemy from advancing further for a few years, said the generals, they would be lucky. The idea of attacking the capital was ridiculous.

Yo Fei's youth lost him that battle. He resigned his commission and joined the army of the governor of Hopei Province.

"Tell me, Yo Fei," said the governor, "you are a brave man, but how many men do you think you can fight single handed?"

"Who can say?" replied Yo Fei. "Bravery is not enough. Brains are necessary to win wars. A good general must first plan his campaign, then execute it. Never worry about a general not being brave, but if he does not plan, you have good cause to worry."

The governor was amused. "My man," he said, in an attempt to jest, "you are certainly a most extraordinary soldier."

"Do not joke about him," said an old man who attended the conference. "This young man has talent. When the time comes, he will be the most able general in the land."

Yo Fei soon justified the old man's confidence. He trained his army by entirely new methods teaching each man, whether mounted or on foot, to shoot with the bow and arrow just as he had learned from his beloved instructor, Chao, and when Wang Yen, one of the senior generals, refused to use his troops to retake the city of Hsin Hsiang, Yo Fei begged the governor to allow him to use his own crack troops.

The governor consented, and Yo Fei made his plans. The morning dawned propitiously for the attack. Using his new strategy, the young general led his men into the city, made

prisoners of two enemy generals, and inflicted severe losses on the Tsin armies. But once he had gained the interior of the city, Yo Fei knew he was in grave danger. His men were tired after more than forty eight hours of battle. At any moment the enemy might send fresh armies to attack him on all sides. He knew that the city would never be safe until his army occupied the surrounding country. Instead of winning a conclusive victory, he had merely put his own armies in a precarious position.

The next morning, what he had expected came to pass. The scouts reported that a large enemy force was massed on the plain to the south.

Yo Fei knew that the occasion called for a hard and heavy assault on orthodox lines, but he was determined that each man in his army should know what was expected of him. Like the modern Commando officers he made a point of sharing all his knowledge with his men as well as with the officers. Yo Fei knew every man in his army personally, and was familiar with his skill and his proficiency in the use of weapons.

Having decided to fight, the young general called his men together and spoke to them earnestly.

'My fellow soldiers' he said, 'you have done well to retake the city of Hsin Hsing, but that is not enough. The enemy is concentrating all his efforts on the coming battle. We are outnumbered. Many of you have not even slept to restore your strength. But it is better to live than to sleep. We either win the battle or die—all of us. So saying he mounted his horse and, with a huge, eighteen foot spear in his right hand, he rode off at the head of his troops.

The battle was a fierce one. It lasted from dawn until dusk, when the enemy withdrew leaving the plain strewn with dead and wounded. The enemy forces were strong, outnumbering Yo Fei's men ten to one, but they were not so skillful as Yo Fei's.

troops In those days a soldier depended on his physical strength, and on skill in the use of the bow and arrow and spear and sword, to dispose of his enemy If he lost his weapons, he fought with his hands, wrestling and grappling with his enemy, trying to gouge out his eyes and crack his spine

This battle has no parallel in history The men on both sides fought till they were exhausted As darkness fell, the battlefield resounded with the groans of the wounded and dying The ground was a swamp of blood Yo Fei lay on his camp cot bleeding severely from his wounds Suddenly he was aware of a man standing at his bedside It was a scout He had brought the news, that the enemy was sending another huge army to the attack Yo Fei made a quick decision His troops were too tired to fight, too tired to march to go out and meet the enemy Possibly the column the man had seen was not an army It might be a few of the enemy coming to collect their wounded If the news of the enemy's advance should reach his men he decided they might be unable to rest and become panic stricken He would take a chance and give his men as much sleep as possible before rallying them He immediately ordered the man who had brought the news to be put in solitary confinement with as much food and wine as he wanted so that he would not spread the news and went to sleep after posting sentries on the outskirts of the camp Like the British Admiral Nelson centuries later, he turned a blind eye to bad news

At dawn the next morning the enemy had not yet attacked Yo Fei knew that the worst was over even though they were surrounded Many difficulties were ahead To hold on he would have to maintain a supply line to the south, for his army had only food enough for a few days If the supply line could be opened he would be able to hold the position and repulse the enemy by well timed sallies He therefore dispatched a

messenger to the main body of the Sung troops, requesting food and reinforcements. The message was received by General Wang Yen, who had refused to use his army to capture the position Yo Fei had criticized him in no uncertain terms when he pleaded to be allowed to make the attack. Wang Yen well understood the grave position his young rival was in. He thought that from his point of view Yo Fei could not be in a better position, so he ignored the dispatch.

Weeks went by, with Yo Fei and his men waiting. After they had eaten everything, including Yo Fei's own war horse, the young general decided to fight his way to the north, relying on guerrilla raids on enemy encampments for food. His march to the north is one of the unforgotten epics of military history. Marching by night and hiding by day, the army covered hundreds of miles, and finally joined the troops of General Chuog Chieh at the extreme north of the State. Chung Chieh was delighted to welcome Yo Fei, and placed him in command of an army corps. The other generals, however, did not like the newcomer, with his unorthodox manners and his habit of mixing with the common soldiers. Yo Fei, like the modern American and British generals, wore the same kind of clothes as his men and refused to array himself in fine silks and elaborate robes, as did the other leaders. "My men fight with me, so I live with them," he once wrote. He had been with the northern army less than a year when old General Chung Chieh was called to his ancestors. Yo Fei then found himself without a friend, since his army was now under the command of General Tu Chung who hated everyone but himself. Instead of resigning, however, he decided to stay to protect the interests of the men he had trained and fought with so long.

The armies of Tsin, however, knew that the newly appointed general was little more than a name, and immediately launched a

heavy attack on the Sung troops. The general was taken by surprise, and although Yo Fei pleaded to fight on the lines of his new tactics, he would not listen but surrendered to the enemy with great ceremony. Yo Fei preferred to fight and, with a hastily recruited army of officers and men, he escaped to the hills in the South, and set about forming China's first guerrilla army.

The task must have been a formidable one. How Yo Fei managed to keep control of such a force has always remained a mystery. He divided his forces into small groups under loyal officers, and instructed each man in the art of guerrilla fighting. He taught them how to live on the land and also how to conceal themselves by day and march by night. They learned archery and the art of making armour and weapons. Above all he instilled into each of them the same discipline by which he himself lived.

He was particularly stern in regard to looting. Some of the groups began to make raids on the towns and rob the farmers and civilians. On hearing this, Yo Fei issued strict orders forbidding such practices. He wanted his men to have the respect of the inhabitants and win their friendship. Everything was to be paid for. He personally went to the towns to sell his own property to buy food for his men, with whom he lived on equal terms. When the money was all exhausted he organized a system of protection for the towns and the merchants, appointing various members of his army to act as police and to drive off robbers and bandits. Gradually the entire district became loyal to his leadership, but he refused all offers to live in the towns and take office under the local government. He was building an army not for defence, but for offence. He had one ambition, to drive out the invader and restore his master, the old Emperor, to the throne.

The fame of his army spread rapidly. Yo Fei's name became a password in the camp of the enemy, and many of the invading

troops came to surrender to Yo Fei and pleaded to be enlisted in his army

Finally, two years later, with a force of more than a hundred thousand well armed men, Yo Fei marched south and presented himself to the Emperor, who immediately created him an imperial general

The enemy, however, was quick to take advantage of Yo Fei's march to the south, and advanced all along a one thousand-mile front pushing deep into the southern territory. Yo Fei distinguished himself during those bitter days by fighting a series of brilliant actions that delayed the advance of the mighty armies. He raised the siege of Hangchow and destroyed thousands of the enemy in Chekiang. His tactics were mainly intended to let the enemy advance and then to cut off his rear and surround him by night.

It was not long before the enemy's forces retreated without giving battle whenever they saw the huge banner of red silk bearing the name "YO" in large white letters.

The man seemed invincible. "It is easier to pull down a mountain than to defeat Yo Fei's army" was the saying among the invaders, who began to retreat as fast as they had advanced. Yo Fei's army was small, but by breaking it up into separate advance units, the clever young general gave the enemy the impression that he was in command of large forces, and so the invaders retreated day by day.

Finally, after almost five years of fighting, Yo Fei had safely installed the Emperor in the Southern capital of Hangchow, and was able to report that he had the situation well in hand, even though desultory fighting was still in progress in many parts of the country.

While supervising an attack on an army that threatened Canton, Yo Fei received a personal summons from the Emperor to return to Hangchow. He did not want to leave his troops on

the eve of the battle, but an order from the Emperor had to be obeyed. When he arrived, he was shown straight into the throne room of the temporary palace.

The Emperor stood up to greet him and ordered all the other generals and high officials to do the same — a singular honour for one so young. After making a long and elaborate speech of congratulation, the Emperor presented Yo Fei with a complete set of silver armour, a sword of pure gold, a purple robe embroidered with gold thread, and a magnificent set of harness for his horse, a saddle and bridle embossed with silver and precious stones. Then, to the sound of bells and gongs, a guard of honour marched into the throne room bearing the highest honour the Emperor could present to his triumphant general, a large silk flag on which the Emperor himself had written "*Tsing Chung Yo Fei*," which means "Able and loyal Yo Fei."

That night the Emperor invited Yo Fei to a private banquet. They sat long into the night eating choice tidbits and drinking the best wines. It was well towards morning, and the cocks outside were already crowing when the Emperor put his hand on Yo Fei's powerful shoulder. "My brother," he said, "I notice that you like wine. I see that you drink and that your brain is still clear, which shows me you have greater ability than most men. I have a request to make of you."

Yo Fei immediately stood up and saluted the Emperor. He was wearing his new purple robe with the silver armour, and the great sword was dangling at his belt, but when the Emperor made such a request, he forgot everything but the fact that he was a simple soldier sworn to serve the dynasty.

The Emperor lay back in his big chair and laughed softly at his general. Perhaps he was happy that he had discovered Yo Fei's one pleasure. He knew the general did not care for clothes, food or comfort, but that he did enjoy good wine.





"My friend," he said, "promise me that you will never again drink any wine until you have retaken my northern capital, Kaifeng. My heart is there."

Yo Fei promised. He left the palace determined to do the Emperor's bidding. Wine was his one indulgence in life. He had other worries, however, one being that his mother was in the enemy occupied area in the north. One day she sent him a message by a refugee. "You are not to worry about your aged mother. Devote your whole life to national affairs. Do your duty."

The message stirred his love for his mother so profoundly that he organized an expedition to penetrate the country to the north and bring her to safety. Seventeen times, soldiers departed and never returned. The eighteenth party returned with his mother and wife, but his mother was so sick and old that she could scarcely recognize her son.

Yo Fei continued to build an army to achieve his ambition to retake the northern capital, but he soon found that in giving the Emperor a strong and secure seat in Hangchow he had made a grave error. The Sung dynasty prospered and both ministers and people began to get fat and contented with what they had. Although the enemy in the north was strong they felt it was not worth while to fight any longer.

The leader of the anti war faction was the Prime Minister, Chin Kuei. He proposed to the Emperor that the Southern Sung dynasty should make an appeasement treaty with the Northern dynasty, handing over three large cities and paying an annual tribute for a cessation of the northern aggression. The Prime Minister argued that the southern armies could never hope to conquer the invaders, and that eventually they would collapse, which would result in the invaders occupying the Emperor's capital and perhaps putting him to death.

The Emperor was greatly frightened, and although Yo Fei's armies were pressing back the invaders, he allowed the Prime Minister to send a mission to the Northern Tsin dynasty to arrange the shameful peace terms. When Yo Fei heard the news, he resigned. The Emperor refused to accept his resignation. Three times subsequently he resigned, but each time the Emperor was adamant. The army needed Yo Fei. His next grief came when his mother died.

This time the Emperor could not refuse, so Yo Fei and his son went to pay honour to her memory. The Emperor wanted to give her a State funeral. He planned to have nine ranking generals carry the coffin, and further offered to build an estate for Yo Fei where he could live and bury his mother.

Yo Fei refused. "The invaders are still in our country," he said. "This is no time to build a home. I have work to do." He also refused to allow the generals to carry his mother's coffin. Instead, he and his son carried it some twenty miles from their home to the burial ground he had bought and buried it with simple rites. Near the grave, they built a small hut, where they lived for many months, making daily visits to the grave to put flowers on it and burn incense before it.

The Emperor's armies missed Yo Fei, and it was not long before the monarch sent a message to the general asking him to visit the palace. He had heard that Yo Fei was ill and going blind, and he offered him the services of the imperial physicians.

Yo Fei, however, refused to return to the service. He told the Emperor bluntly that while Prime Minister Chin Kuei was in power, there would be little use in his directing the army.

Although the Emperor was still determined to make peace, he thought the presence of a standing army might enable him to get better terms from his powerful neighbours. For a year he continued to send messages to Yo Fei. Each delegation met with

the same refusal. Finally six ministers arrived at the little hut. For six days and nights they argued with the obstinate general. Finally he gave way and returned to the capital. The Emperor sent him back to the front, and in a short time he had inflicted a severe defeat on the forces of Tsin at Hupai.

He was a very different Yo Fei from the young warrior who had scored those early successes. The long sojourn in the little hut had increased his desire for knowledge. More and more he turned his attention to books and scholarly pursuits. Wherever his army was stationed, he would send messengers to invite the scholars and professors of the district to visit him, and would keep them in conversation until the early hours of the morning. He began to write himself and to take an interest in politics. Whenever he had a suggestion to make for the well being of the State or of his armies, he would write to the Emperor a long personal letter in distinguished and scholarly prose. He began to write books on military tactics and on the great truths of life, and he composed several noteworthy poems that are still read and revered in China. One of these is sung by the Chinese soldiers as they go into battle. Yo Fei wrote it when he was thirty years old.

"My hair is standing on end with indignation  
As I lean over the ramparts and stare at the driving rain  
I lift up my eyes to the sky and sigh for I am  
exasperated

'Fame and success at thirty are dust and ashes now  
My thoughts are thousands of miles away  
I am thinking of the disgrace and insult  
In the capture of the Emperors Ching and Kang

'Let us go let us cross the Holan Mountains,  
With our wagons and warriors

I am eager to feast on the flesh of the barbarians,  
And to drink their blood and talk pleasantly the while  
" We must retake what we have lost —  
All the territories that have been lost —  
And report our victory to the throne "

Yo Fei's love of literature in no way diminished his military successes. The day came when he had brought his armies deep into the enemy's territory. To his dismay, the messenger from the capital brought him a letter begging him not to advance any farther because his victories would surely hinder the peace negotiations between the two countries. Yo Fei was furious. He wrote a personal note to the Emperor, saying " We cannot trust the enemy. The only language he understands is conquest. Your cabinet ministers see only the present. They do not look ahead. Their mistakes will make the people mock at them for centuries to come "

The Emperor never received the letter. It was stolen by an agent who handed it to Chin Kuei, the treacherous Prime Minister, who pressed ahead with his peace negotiations, and finally, in 1139 A D., the treaty was signed. Because of Yo Fei's victories, the Southern dynasty was to get back the Honan and Shensi Provinces and all imperial captives except the former Emperor and his crown prince, who had died in slavery.

The present Emperor realized how well Yo Fei had served him, and wished to reward him. He sent a messenger offering him the permanent rank of knighthood, the greatest honour he could bestow upon him. Yo Fei refused in an indignant letter.

" Your enemies are cunning and unreliable, he wrote "What is happening to day is dangerous and insecure. We should be worrying about it rather than thinking of a national celebration. This is the time to tell our soldiers and people to prepare

for greater hardships, not to issue peace terms and decorations. Such celebrations will only make the enemy laugh. If I were to accept the honour of this permanent promotion at this time, knowing that our enemies will surely ignore the peace treaty later, it would be a great insult to the dignity of our government. I therefore beg to refuse the honour."

In another letter warning the Emperor of the danger, Yo Fei said "The fate of China depends on a total victory by recapturing all the lost territories. Only then will she be able to avenge our foes' insult to our captured Emperors and our nation. We must make them declare their allegiance to us instead of declaring our allegiance to them." All these letters eventually fell into the hands of the Prime Minister, Chin Kuei, who saw in Yo Fei a great menace to his power. Yo Fei had also openly attacked the Prime Minister by comparing him to the greatest traitor in Chinese history, Chao Chao, of the Three Kingdoms. Thus Yo Fei and Chin Kuei became bitter enemies.

Yo Fei's opinion of the Tsin forces was correct. Within a few months of the peace, they invaded Honan and Shensi Provinces, retaking all the territory they had given back to the Sung dynasty under the treaty. Again Yo Fei was called back to save his country. Within a year he and his generals had recaptured not only Shensi and Honan Provinces but also the valuable territories in Hopei Province, and had chased the opposing armies to a point only forty five miles from the former capital, Kaifeng. It seemed a matter of only a few days before the victory would be complete, and Yo Fei was able to drink his wine again. The generals of the Tsin forces were surrendering one after another, and the enemy was in no condition to resist effectively as Yo Fei had captured the strategically important city of Chu Hsien Chen.

But in spite of Yo Fei's continued victories and successes, the Prime Minister wanted to please his friends in the Tsin government and show his power over Yo Fei by negotiating another

peace. He was willing to give up all the territory north of the Yangtze River, which meant half of China, in exchange for peace. He knew the Emperor was tired of so many years of fighting, and he set to work to convince him that peace negotiations now would put an end to all the hostilities. If the Suog dynasty would give up all the territory that the Tsin government wanted, there would be no more war. The Emperor listened and sent an order to Yo Fei to withdraw his troops.

Yo Fei wrote back to the Emperor that the morale of his soldiers was extraordinarily high, that the enemy had left all the heavy equipment in his haste to cross the Yellow River, and that complete victory was only a matter of days. The Emperor wrote back, saying Yo Fei and his men should stay where they were, but that they were not to advance. Prime Minister Chin Kuei, however, said that peace could not be negotiated while the armies were in the field. He recalled all the other generals whom Yo Fei had stationed in the newly recaptured cities. Because he feared Yo Fei's power, he decided to let him stay and to recall the armies supporting the flanks of Yo Fei's main forces, which left Yo Fei's force alone at the front. The Prime Minister then reported to the Emperor that Yo Fei could not possibly defend his line alone and must be recalled at once.

Again the foolish Emperor listened. A messenger was sent to Yo Fei carrying the imperial instructions on a plate of gold. Yo Fei refused, and only after receiving such instructions a dozen times did he consent to withdraw his forces.

He was heartbroken. The crowning victory of twenty years of loyal service was to be taken from him. Yet even his last military operation was a brilliant one. He was deep in enemy territory without support. The mighty Tsin armies could easily have trapped him and destroyed his little army, which was what the Prime Minister expected would happen. Yo Fei knew his

danger, and met it with a bold bluff. He announced that his army was to attack on the following day, and saw to it that the news was given to the many spies in the area. Then, under cover of night, he moved his entire division out of town and out of danger.

The scene as the victorious army retreated is an epic of Chinese history. The big man on the white horse rode in silence in front of his men. He could not speak to any one. As the army passed through the great fertile lands he had reclaimed for the Emperor, the peasants clung to his stirrups and begged him to stay to protect them. The mayors and councils of the towns he had liberated presented petitions appealing to him to turn and fight. "We are all Chinese," they said. "We beg of you to stay and rule over us."

In Yo Fei's saddlebags were the twelve imperial decrees. He could not listen to the people. Only when a high official came and pointed out to him that without the protection of the army all civilians in the town would be murdered, did he consent to halt the retreat for five days, just long enough to give the civilians an opportunity to evacuate. Then the sad march of the defeated conqueror continued.

When Yo Fei arrived at Hangchow, he immediately went to see his Emperor. The monarch had heard of the retreat, but it was not he who had sent the twelve imperial decrees. They had all been forged by the Prime Minister. The Emperor promised Yo Fei to look into the matter, and sent for the Prime Minister.

Yo Fei was leaving the palace when he was arrested by an armed guard and thrown into prison. He knew then that the Prime Minister had gained control of the Empire. Soon he was joined by his son, Yuen, and by another general, Chang Hsien. The charge against Chang was that he had plotted against the



safety of the State Yo Fei and his son were held as accessories to the fact

The Emperor was not told of the arrest Within a short time, Yo Fei was brought for trial behind barred doors

The case was assigned to a judge named Ho Chu. Judge Ho asked Yo Fei to confess his crime Yo Fei replied with great dignity that the only crime he had committed was tattooed on his back "See for yourself," he cried, and, ripping off his coat, he showed the judge his back, with the four words *Ching Chung Pao Kuo* — "Do your best for your country" After a long session, Judge Ho found Yo Fei innocent of the charge and acquitted him The Prime Minister, however, insisted that Yo Fei should be punished But Ho Chu was a man of honour He promptly resigned, saying he must maintain justice

The Prime Minister accepted the judge's resignation, and appointed a man named Wan Szu K'o, on whom he could rely for the verdict he required He was uncertain, however, as to the wisdom of putting Yo Fei on trial again Reports had come to him that the people were incensed against him for his action, and that there was danger of a revolution Yo Fei was the most popular hero in the country The people looked upon him as their saviour

For days the Prime Minister hesitated One afternoon, as he sat in his private garden in the warm rays of the setting sun, peeling a tangerine, his wife came to him "What is on your mind, husband?" she asked "Is it the case of Yo Fei?"

"Yes, my dear I have reports that his arrest is likely to cause a revolution I cannot decide what is the best thing to do"

"And you call yourself a great man! You think you are a leader!" said his wife "Will you take my advice for once?"

Chin Kuei was in a bad state of nerves He did something that was rare for a Chinese of those days He asked his wife to give him her opinion on a state problem

"The problem is simple," said his wife. "Remember the old saying about the man who captured the tiger. He found that it was easier to capture the animal than to free it."

Chin Kuei saw the wisdom of her speech. He could not stop his persecution of Yo Fei halfway. He must finish whatever he had started. He called his servant and wrote a note to Judge Wan.

Next morning the new judge, wearing his official robes for the first time, sat on the raised throne in the Supreme Court and ordered the trial to begin. The prisoner, Yo Fei, was brought in with iron manacles on his wrists. He stood with his head high, looking sternly at the judge. The two guards behind him, at a sign from the judge, beat him to his knees. Thus the trial began.

The judge asked Yo Fei whether it was true that he had dangerous intentions towards the safety of the State. Yo Fei laughed. "What I have done all my life is to save this country," he said. "The charge is simply absurd."

"Confess, vile criminal!" roared the judge.

Yo Fei laughed again. "You confess, judge. You have more to confess than I have. Call your witnesses."

The judge had no witnesses. He ordered the men to beat Yo Fei with their clubs. Yo Fei fell to the ground under the heavy blows. Two court attendants dragged him up. "Now confess!" cried the judge, but Yo Fei was still smiling.

The judge then ordered the evidence to be taken in private. Yo Fei was taken out of court to the torture room used for common criminals. He was tied to a bench and fayed with a whip of many thongs that had been dipped in tar to make them tear the skin. After five hundred lashes he was brought back into court. He was a pitiable sight. His clothes were torn to pieces, his flesh was torn, one of his arms was broken. He could not walk, and could hardly move.

"Now will you confess?" said the judge. He ordered a paper to be put in front of Yo Fei. Yo Fei saw the paper and collapsed. The guards kicked him into consciousness. One of them put a brush in his hand; Yo Fei began to write, lying on the floor, the blood from his battered face dropping on the paper. An hour later the guards gave the signed document to the judge.

Yo Fei's confession read.

"I, Yo Fei, born in the village of Tang Yin in the country of Hsiang Chow in the province of Honan, make this confession. . . . I was taught and brought up by my mother, who tattooed on my back the reminder that I must do my best for my country. . . . I have thus only one aim in life: to get rid of the invaders and to restore the liberty of our two captured Emperors. . . . My only crime is that I have safeguarded the throne in the provisional capital, Hangchow, and fought the enemy all the way back to a point only forty-five miles from the old capital. . . . This is my written confession. I have nothing more to say. Yo Fei."

The judge was furious. He ordered the guards to carry Yo Fei back to the torture chamber, until he noticed that he was no longer conscious. Torture would do no good. Instead he ordered a recess, and went to report to the Prime Minister that he had failed.

The two plotters put their heads together. Without a confession they could not execute Yo Fei. People were already talking and threatening to rebel. They decided the best thing to do was to leave Yo Fei in prison and issue a statement that he was ill after the privations he had suffered in the wars.

It was a full month before Yo Fei could walk. He was confined to the State prison, and because of his rank and his fame the wardens treated him like an honoured guest. One morning the head warden, who insisted on waiting on his celebrated

The old warden stepped forward "No, sir, it is not true. The general knew nothing of this plot. I conceived it and ordered my daughter to execute it."

The judge would not listen. "Take him and the girl away," he said. "What I am going to watch is too good for their eyes."

Yo Fei stood up and looked sternly at the judge. He raised the cup of tea. "I am not afraid to die. One's own life is not so important as the future of one's country. For that I have fought, and I have won." Then, without hesitation, he drank the poisoned tea and sat down.

The following morning the guards found him dead, but sitting rigidly in his chair, his eyes wide open as if they were accusing his betrayers.

Such was the end of one of China's greatest military leaders. He was only thirty-eight years old when he died.

The Prime Minister was determined to erase all memory of Yo Fei from the records. He issued warrants for the arrest of all members of the general's family, but they seemed to have escaped with the exception of the eldest daughter, who committed suicide, and the son, Yuen, who was beheaded the morning following his father's death. When he went to the prison next day to gloat over Yo Fei's body, he found that it had been removed by some person unknown.

Twenty-eight years later, when the Prime Minister and his Emperor were dead, the body was exhumed and Yo Fei was given a State funeral, but history had exacted a big price of China for the unfair treatment meted out to Yo Fei and his family. The Mongolians had conquered the forces of Tsin and had overthrown the Southern Sung dynasty as well as the Northern States. For the first time in her history, China was ruled by an alien race, showing that then, as now, appeasement does not pay.

power and luxury never last, but that the names and deeds of China's great men live forever. To-day the Chinese soldiers using American arms and trained in the latest American methods are relentlessly fighting the Japanese ; and as they fight, they sing the song of Yo Fei, which expresses the fighting spirit of modern China. When you go to China, as you may well do by airplane after the war, be sure to visit the tomb of Yo Fei, which is one of the wonders of the world and is as colourful as Yo Fei's life itself.



CHAPTER VII

THE PIRATE'S SON  
TSENG CHENG-KUNG

(1625 A.D. — 1662 A.D.)

*In the Ming Dynasty*

The Manchurians wanted him dead or alive; dead if he continued to resist, alive if he was willing to surrender. They respected him as much as they feared and hated him. But he chose to fight in the last desperate years of the Ming dynasty, in order that China might be ruled by the Chinese themselves and not by a foreign power. He was the son of a pirate, but he had the deportment of one of noble blood. He was brave as a

lion and strong as the strongest man in China. He was tall as a pine tree, but in his manner he was as gentle as a child. Such a man was Tseng Cheng Kung, the son of "The Dragon"—a man so noble, so patriotic, that the Emperor made him a member of the royal family by granting him the right to carry his own name, *Chu*, a singular honour in the history of China. With Japanese blood in his veins, but with his heart in China, Tseng Cheng Kung is to day revered by the Chinese and the Japanese alike, and even his sworn enemies, the Manchurians, honoured him after his death.

The drama began in a boat sailing off the coast of the great Japanese port of Nagasaki in 1624 A. D. The crew were Chinese pirates and death had robbed them of their leader. They sat on the broad deck of the canvas-covered sampan, surveying the dead body of their leader. Each man wore a brightly coloured handkerchief over his head, the insignia of his trade, a short blue blouse, and narrow trousers reaching to his ankles. Each man was armed to the teeth, and each eyed his neighbour uncertainly. The problem was to select a successor as their leader.

Four of the men suddenly drew apart from the others, and huddled in conversation. They were the four brothers Tseng, known respectively as "The Tiger," "The Dragon," "The Leopard" and "Tiger Skin."

They were no ordinary pirates. Previously they had been merchants. When pirates had robbed their ship at sea, they had joined them, and had attained high rank in the gang of cut throats. As they sat and talked, a fight broke out among the others. Tseng Chi Lung, the one who was known as "The Dragon," sprang to his feet and pushed his way into the circle of gesticulating men. He was tall and husky, and in his hand was

a huge sword. The others drew back at the sight of this daring young person. Many of them did not know his name. "The Dragon" addressed himself to the eldest of the pirates. "Why wrangle about who is to be our new leader?" he said. "You will only kill one another and our force will be weakened. Let Heaven decide for us. We will draw lots."

The idea pleased the elder men. They immediately ordered the others to build an altar. When the candles had been lit and incense kindled, they ordered everyone on deck to kneel facing the south and to pray for guidance. Then the drawing of lots commenced. The name of each member of the crew was written on a slab of bamboo and put in a big bamboo tube, which was solemnly shaken by each member. The eldest of the pirates put in his hand and drew. He read the name aloud. It was that of Tseng Chi Lung, "The Dragon."

Tseng Chi Lung had travelled the China Sea, had married a Japanese woman named Tagawa, and was a skilful fighter and navigator. He decided that the only way to succeed in piracy was to work on a vast scale. Within a short time he had increased his fleet to nearly a hundred vessels and controlled the seas from Korea and the Liuchu Islands to the southeast coast of China proper. The spoils of the pirate soon became so great that it was impossible to carry them on the ships.

"The Dragon" and his brothers decided to search for an island where they could conceal their loot and repair their ships when damaged by storm or battle with their victims. For months they searched the desolate coasts of their ocean empire, and then "The Dragon" remembered a tiny island, now known as Formosa, off the coast of Amoy, where he and his brothers were born. The island, surrounded by rocks, was little known to the outside world and was only occasionally visited by seafaring men. He immediately set sail for the spot, and found the island



very much as it had been years before. There was no organized society, and the inhabitants were a few fishermen of Malay stock who lived almost in a state of barbarism.

One summer morning the simple islanders saw the sails of the pirate ships looming through the mist, and within an hour or two the pirate hordes had landed. "The Dragon" immediately proclaimed himself master of the island, and set his men to work to build a harbour and construct hiding places for the loot. Any of the inhabitants who resented the presence of the invaders were put to death, and to prevent the news of the pirates' occupation leaking to the outside world, "The Dragon" forbade any of the islanders to leave. Whenever his fleet sailed away, he left a strong garrison to defend his treasure.

With such an impregnable base, "The Dragon" was able to organize his pirates on the lines of a national navy. It was sooo impossible for any merchant vessel to sail the China Sea without obtaining a pass from "The Dragon," just as to day neutral ships cannot navigate in the war zones without a "navicert" from the Allied navies. "The Dragon" found that it was easier to obtain wealth by this form of protection than by fighting, and the owners of the ships preferred to pay an agreed sum of three hundred taels a year rather than lose their ships and their lives.

"The Dragon" never forgot, however, that he was a Chinese. He gave his men instructions that any Chinese aboard the ships his men captured were to be set free, and that no Chinese villages were to be plundered. One day he was entertaining a Chinese general his men had captured before returning him to the mainland. "It is a pity you are so far from Peking," said the general. "Your power and honour are so great that the Emperor should hear of you. He would most certainly appreciate your services."

As a result of the general's recommendation, an ambassador came from the Emperor proposing that "The Dragon" be appointed to the position of Governor of Fukien Province.

"The Dragon" was overwhelmed with pride and joy. Wealth he had in plenty, but honour none, until the imperial decrees had arrived. He immediately set about fortifying the whole coast of Fukien and raising a great army, which he paid for out of his own pocket. In his native village of Nan-An he built for himself a huge palace. The walls surrounding it were more than twenty miles in length, and reached down to the sea, where "The Dragon" had constructed a vast harbour for his ships.

As governor of the province, he could no longer engage himself in robbery on the high seas, but he still continued to collect the safe conduct money from merchant ships, because there was no one to stop him and the presence of his ships prevented other pirates from operating.

In those days the Chinese ships were large wooden vessels with high prows and sterns and triangular sails. They were as speedy as any ships on the sea. On their decks were catapults for throwing stones and fire pots. The crews were armed with powerful crossbows and spears, and at the bow of each ship was a device for attaching the bow to the side of the ship under attack so as to enable the fierce, bloodthirsty pirates to board it. If the merchant ship paid its tribute without complaint, "The Dragon's" vessel convoyed it to safety. But if resistance was offered, the merchant vessel was seized and its crew held for ransom, its cargo going into "The Dragon's" treasure store.

Reports soon reached the Emperor that "The Dragon's" army was better equipped and better trained than his own. "The Dragon" built his own armour shop to fashion weapons of steel and deadly flame throwers, and fed his soldiers on the best of food. His own bodyguard he equipped with armour of pure gold studded with precious stones.

Day by day "The Dragon's" power increased, but in one matter all his might was of no avail. His wife, whom he loved dearly, was living in Japan, and the Japanese would not let her leave the country. The law of Japan was the same then as it is to day—a Japanese woman married to a foreigner must remain in the country.

The decision of the Japanese government infuriated "The Dragon." For days he strode the corridors of his great palace raving at his brothers and his advisers. Something had to be done. How could a man live without his wife? He would teach those Japanese miscreants a lesson. But months later he was still without his wife. His character had changed into that of a sour disappointed man, but deep down in his heart there was the conviction that one day he would be able to raise a large enough army and navy to take his wife out of Japan by force.

When an order came from the Emperor that he was to engage in an expedition against other pirate groups, "The Dragon" saw his opportunity to launch his plan. After a fierce campaign against the pirates, during which his brother, "The Tiger", was killed in single combat with one of the pirate chiefs, "The Dragon" was promoted to a higher rank and given the task of governing as well as defending the Province of Fukien, which at that time was ravaged by famine. "The Dragon" made a tour of his domain, where men, women and children were dying of hunger in great numbers. The sight of these poor people gasping for life and food gave him an idea. He remembered the island of Formosa, where he had hidden his loot in the days when he was a simple pirate. Why should not these suffering people be evacuated to the island, where they could live and become loyal subjects of their benefactor? The crafty "Dragon" must have smiled to himself as the idea formed in his mind. To save life was a good thing, to acquire power for himself was

sweet, too. After he had announced his intention to his immediate superior in official rank, who agreed doubtless because he was afraid of "The Dragon", and also because he was aghast at a problem he could not solve himself, "The Dragon" set to work.

He provided ships and money for all the famine-stricken people who could make the journey. Each person received three silver *taels*, and each group of three a cow. On their arrival at Formosa, a green and fertile paradise, the people were organized into communities, given farm implements, and put to work. In a short time the lovely island was producing an abundance of rich crops, and the contented people were paying taxes to "The Dragon", whose wealth mounted with fantastic speed.

The Emperor, on hearing of the success of the venture, gave his governor another promotion, equivalent to a knighthood. When he had doubled the strength of his army by conscripting the healthy, well fed sons of the multitude he had transplanted from the mainland, "The Dragon" turned his attention to bringing his wife from distant Japan. He sent a vessel laden with gifts for his wife's family, and also a portrait of himself in the full robes of a top ranking general of the Ming dynasty. His wife's relatives were impressed, but they still would not allow such a valuable possession as a Japanese woman to leave her homeland. For two years "The Dragon" waited for their answer. Finally he received, not his wife, but his son, a boy of seven, named Tseng Cheng Kung.

The tall warrior received his son with mixed emotions. He loved his son. To see the strong, healthy boy was a delight, but the thought that his wife was still held prisoner was infuriating. Bring her back he would, even if he had to fight the Japanese.

But the outside world was to take a hand in the career of "The Dragon". Even as he stared at his son, with anger against the Japanese growing in his heart, the Western powers were

striving to penetrate the Orient The seafaring men of Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands had sailed their adventurous galleons as far as the islands of the East Indies, and the Portuguese had turned ambitious eyes on the little Peninsula of Macao Macao was a pirate settlement, and was handed over to the Portuguese

A Dutch fleet had attempted to land on Macao, but had been defeated by the Portuguese with the help of the local Chinese inhabitants The Dutch retreated to the island of Formosa, where they proceeded to build fortifications against the Portuguese They then began to colonize the island, building churches and schools, teaching the natives to speak Dutch Within a short time, more than two thousand Dutch were living on the island The Spaniards had moved into the Philippine Islands, whence an expedition was dispatched to settle on Formosa

The Spaniards chose a spot on the island on the opposite side from the Dutch settlement and began to build The Dutch resented the presence of the foreigners, and immediately sent an expedition that quickly conquered them and gave the people of the Netherlands further control over the island, which the Portuguese called "Ilha Formosa" — the Beautiful Island Formosa is indeed beautiful, and it has the military advantage of being surrounded by rocky reefs and treacherous currents that make the approach by sea difficult

The Dutch treated the Chinese inhabitants well and under their benign administration the island prospered, especially with the three harvests a year which the ideal climate made possible As the Dutch influence increased, however the power of "The Dragon" over his subjects waned, and when in the year 1644, the Manchus invaded China and struck at the capital, Peking, China was caught unprepared, "The Dragon" found himself living in a country faced with disaster and revolution

Events followed one another so quickly that he and his companion generals in the South could hardly keep up with them. The Emperor hanged himself in his palace to prevent being captured by the Manchu troops. There was no crown prince to succeed him. The Manchu troops swept over the country like locusts. The only military power was stationed south of the Yellow River, one of the armies being that of "The Dragon". The problem was more than a military one. Unless an Emperor could be found to act as a figurehead, the people would never support the armies, and China would be lost.

"The Dragon" and his fellow generals chose a nephew of the dead Emperor and crowned him in Nanking, where a large army under "The Dragon's" brother, Hung Kuei formerly called "Tiger Skin", was garrisoned. In Fukien, "The Dragon's" domain, the remnants of the defeated army of the Emperor of Ming sought to join the forces of "The Dragon", and its leaders had found another relative of the dead Emperor and crowned him, giving him the title of King Tang.

Thus there were two factions in China with a common enemy, the Manchus. Both factions wanted to restore the Ming Dynasty and recapture Peking, but neither would support the other.

The crowning of a king in his territory was a shock to "The Dragon" because it menaced his own power. As a loyal subject, however, he could not resist. He decided that the wisest thing to do was to make the best of the situation and court the favour of the new king. He immediately appointed himself the leading duke in the territory, and instead of treating the new Emperor with the respect he might have been expected to show the old one in Peking, he treated him more as an associate and with familiarity. It was not long before he completely dominated the young man. To ensure his own power, "The Dragon" appointed his

relatives and friends to imperial office and thus obtained complete control over the Empire. All this time his wealth and power were growing, as his unlucky enemies realized. Even the Emperor dared not oppose "The Dragon." Again and again his generals and councillors advised the new king to impeach the pirate general, but all knew in their hearts that the man was too powerful.

The relations between the monarch and 'The Dragon' had become well nigh intolerable when, one morning, "The Dragon" walked unceremoniously into the royal presence accompanied by his son, who was now a grown man. The difference between the father and son must have struck the king immediately. While "The Dragon" treated him with scant ceremony, the son gave a formal and respectful salute, and stood awaiting His Majesty's instructions. The king was delighted, and bade the son sit at his side.

From that moment he found it easy to tolerate "The Dragon" because he liked the son more than any other being he had ever met. One morning he commanded the father and son to appear before him and in the presence of the whole court, made a special announcement, greeting the young man, Cheng Kung, as an equal which pleased the father immensely. "My son," said the king, 'I have only one regret in life and that is that I have no daughter whom you could marry. But even though Heaven has not blessed me with one, I am going to make you a member of my family. You will henceforth carry the royal name of Chu, and I pray Heaven that you may be as loyal and devoted to our royal family as any of us.'

Cheng Kung knelt before the monarch and declared his loyalty to the Ming dynasty.

Father and son left the royal dwelling with very different thoughts. While "The Dragon" was thinking that the king's

liking his son meant more power for him, the son was pondering on the future of China, which seemed fraught with grave danger. Cheng Kung known everywhere as "The Son of the Dragon", was as tall as his father. He was handsome and strong, but his heart was different from his father's. While "The Dragon" thought only of money and power, the son loved books and virtue and his country. "My country above all," he wrote on reaching "The Dragon's" castle.

On reading that, his father laughed. "All first, then your country. Look after yourself, and then you will be useful to your country," he said.

A messenger interrupted them. "The Dragon" read the message. It was from Japan, and it said that "The Dragon's" wife was in danger of death. Once in a hundred years, the message said, the Japanese ordered their soldiers to slaughter the Chinese in the Chinese quarter, in order to fulfill the ancient custom *Hsi Chieh*, which means washing the street. Because "The Dragon's" wife was married to a Chinese, she was living in the Chinese section where the soldiers were to conduct their slaughter on the appointed day.

"I will go and fetch her," said Cheng Kung.

"You cannot," replied his father, with a slight sneer, "now that you are a member of the royal family."

"Then you can go," Father.

"I cannot go. Who would command my armies while I was away? It is impossible," said "The Dragon", frowning. He had lived without his wife so long and had so many problems at home, that it was difficult for him to know exactly what to do. He decided, however, to make his wealth work for him. To Japan he sent a huge ship laden with presents and silver, to bribe the Japanese officials and the relatives of his wife's family.



By the time Cheng Kung's mother arrived, China was in chaos. The Manchurians were approaching the borders of Fukien Province. The king and his generals appealed to "The Dragon" to lead his mighty army against the invaders, but "The Dragon" hesitated. He was in a sad predicament, and he wanted to make sure that, whatever happened, he would come out with his life, his wealth and his honour. If he fought and lost, he would be taken prisoner and executed. If he surrendered he might be held responsible for the crowning and protection of King Tang. Without telling his son what was in his mind, he made an outward semblance of preparing the army to fight, but secretly he dispatched an emissary to the leaders of the Manchus.

When the Manchu armies suddenly withdrew from the borders of Fukien Province the people and the king thought they were afraid to fight the forces of "The Dragon". Actually what had happened was that the Manchu general had sent an answer to "The Dragon's" letter, which read

"Honourable Sir,

"We salute and honour you for doing your duty. We know well that it is the duty of every citizen to do his best for his country while he is still able to. That is why you crowned and protected the Ming sovereign. Now the situation has changed, and, as we see it, a wise man would do the right thing and serve a superior and more powerful government. Such a heroic act as surrendering for the good of one's country could not be dishonourable. If you will make a treaty with us, you will become the hero of the hour and do China a great service. At the moment, only the Provinces of Kwangtung and Kwangsi are still resisting in addition to your own powerful army. Should you feel it wise to come to terms, the above said rebellious Provinces might also surrender, and certainly they would be easy to conquer, thus

enabling us to spare a great many lives. On our part we should be honoured to make you the governor of all three Provinces. "

It was the same insidious talk that had made traitors since the beginning of time, the principle of offering a powerful man a reward and making him a slave to his own ambitions.

"The Dragon" was no longer a fighter. Swiftly he made his decision. He would turn over King Tang to the enemy and put his armies at the disposal of the Manchus. He was busy preparing his plan of surrender when his son walked in. His eyes were flaming with rage. In his hand was an unsheathed sword. He saluted his father, then he bowed in filial reverence, but his words were terse and angry. "My father," he said, "I have heard of your plan. Please do not follow it through."

"It is the only way, my son," said "The Dragon". "It is honourable. It will save China. There is no other way."

"There is," said his son. "Father, do not be persuaded. Geographically, all our three Provinces, Fukien, Kwangtung and Kwangsi, are easy to defend. Unlike other Provinces in the north these Provinces all border on the sea. You can open up the ports and have plenty of money to support the army. Then you can organize other forces that are still loyal to the Chinese regime and fight your way back to the capital. You are a sailor. You know the saying — a tiger must never leave his mountain, a fish must stay in the water. Think carefully, my father, before you take the fatal step. The northern countries are not your security and strength, they are like fish out of water."

"The Dragon" stood up abruptly. He glared at his son. His face was red with anger. His eyes were blazing, but he could not speak. He loved his son more than anything on earth. From his son's speech, he realized that the young man had seen through his plan, the thought that his son recognized him as a traitor filled him with shame.

"My son," he said finally, "I must be guided by my own judgment in this — by my own judgment and no one else's" So saying, he left the room

Cheng Kung stood where he was, and his heart swelled with shame and horror. Hot tears welled in his eyes. So great was the agony of his shame that he felt he could not endure it. Never, he decided, would he be a party to such an act. At the risk of being an unfilial son, he would defy his father, even if forced to fight against him.

He strode out into the warm sunshine. From the terrace he could see the green and brown roofs of the town. The summer wind brought him the happy laughter of children, and somewhere someone was playing the lute. Everything that was sweet to him was here — sunshine, laughter and music. This was China, his China. He walked sorrowfully away, until he heard a familiar voice addressing him. It was his uncle, Hung Kuei, who had returned from Nanking to organize his army. To him Cheng Kung poured out his troubles. His uncle was thunderstruck. He had followed his brother unquestioningly since childhood. They had been through the rough, dangerous days of piracy. It seemed impossible that the dauntless "Dragon" should bow to an alien conqueror. That night Hung Kuei went to talk to "The Dragon."

"My dear brother," said Hung Kuei, "permit me to say your son is right. Consider his plan, I beg of you. Life is short and as unreal as the morning dew. This is the time for you to make your name and be remembered for generations to come as the saviour of China. Our country is now in grave danger, and you are at the height of your career. Use your power for China. It is not too late, or I should not have wasted my words to persuade you. I know our country can still be saved."

"And remember this, honourable brother. You still have a huge army in addition to your enormous wealth and you rule

the seven seas with your mighty navy If you decide to fight for the restoration of a Chinese regime, every brave man throughout the country will join you. Seeing all this, I cannot understand why you should want to give yourself and your country into slavery under another race "

"The Dragon " listened His narrow eyes were half closed, his large, wide mouth was a tight line He stood drawn to his full height in his general's dress uniform, a wide sash around his waist, his great barrel chest inflated His iron fingers gripped the hilt of the big sword he carried Finally he spoke, in the tone of one who expects to be obeyed

"You are wrong The Manchurian general means what he says He wants my help to secure the southern Provinces I will help him "

Seeing it was useless to argue, his brother sorrowfully withdrew "The Dragon " acted quickly That evening at sundown, he marched out of the city at the head of the five hundred of his crack troops They marched to Foochow, where the Manchurian general was waiting

The surrender was undertaken with great ceremony "The Dragon " and the Manchurian general, a huge man in a black robe and with a black beard shook his own hand and bowed as a symbol of loyalty to each other Then the soldiers on each side solemnly snapped their arrows in two pieces to signify the end of hostilities and a feast was held which lasted for three days

"The Dragon " was more than anxious to please his superiors He even went so far as to shave the front half of his head, leaving half the crown bald as was the Manchu custom, and to wear the rest of his hair in a braid hanging down his back

Although the Manchus openly praised him for his whole-hearted co-operation, they were scheming to get the better of him They knew not only that he was rich and powerful, but

also that he was a cunning person. As such, they calculated he was bound to outwit them in some way if they were not careful. Why, they wondered, should he have surrendered with only five hundred troops? He had probably left his main forces armed to the teeth under the leadership of his brother, and ready to attack them at any moment.

On the third day of the banquet, the Manchu leader made his decision. He would take "The Dragon" north so that he would be safely out of the way. Swiftly he made arrangements. "The Dragon's" bodyguard was split up into the enemy's ranks so that the soldiers could no longer fight for their master, and in the middle of the night "The Dragon" was informed that he was to retreat to the north with them.

"The Dragon" still trusted the Manchus. "It is a good idea," he said. "I always wanted to go north, but I still have my brothers and son with me. They will not agree to let me leave. They have a huge army here, which you will need."

The wily Manchu chief no longer had reason to conceal his intention. He spoke to "The Dragon" as if he were a common soldier. "This is no longer your business, old man. Your son is no concern of mine. He signalled to an officer, and immediately "The Dragon" was surrounded by a ring of soldiers, their spears pointing at his breast.

The news of what had happened quickly reached Cheng-Kung and Hung Kuei. They immediately fled to the harbour and took to sea in one of "The Dragon's" vessels. Cheng Kung's mother refused to go with them. She said that the Manchus would respect their promise to spare the Cheng family, and that she preferred to live where her husband had placed her rather than go into exile.

The Manchus burst on the cities of Nan An and Amoy like a stream of scalding lava. They butchered the inhabitants,

burned the buildings, and looted the goods. King Tang was executed. "The Dragon's" Japanese wife hanged herself on a tree. All this news reached Cheng Kung when his ship put into port a week later.

On hearing it, the young man took an oath. He would never rest, he would never lay down the sword, until he had avenged his country, his mother and his foster father, the king. And, having taken this oath, he set about achieving his aim.

He needed an army, money, food and weapons. The next night, he and his uncle began a recruiting campaign under the very blades of the Manchu troops. Cheng Kung succeeded in withdrawing to the sea with the greater part of his father's army. Within a short time, Cheng Kung's troops had landed at Amoy and established what in modern warfare would be called a beachhead. In the battle for the Port, the young man proved himself a veritable son of "The Dragon." He led the attack himself, vanquishing a hundred of the enemy's crack troops. Although wounded, he refused medical attention, and truly it seemed as if he had a charmed life. Although he had never had charge of men before, he took command of the large force without delay. Every day more and more soldiers rallied round him, eager to fight under the flag of Cheng Kung.

Unlike his father, Cheng Kung did not seek power. All he sought was to restore the dynasty he served. When another king of the Ming dynasty was crowned in Kwangtung Province, now the Provisional capital of China, he sent his allegiance to the new monarch and redoubled his efforts in another war to carry the battle to the cruel conquerors. With his father's seafaring blood in his veins, it was natural that Cheng Kung should use the sea as his most potent weapon against the enemy. He set his men to work building ships and equipping those already built. Most of his battles were amphibian raids. His well trained

soldiers would land on the coast and make extensive raids inland, retreating to the sea with prisoners and booty. Within eight years this guerrilla army had captured the majority of the ports and cities along the coast from Chekiang to Kwangtung Province and China was divided, with the Manchus holding the inland centres and the Cheng Kung armies in possession of the vital seaboard. Cheng Kung was demonstrating that sea power was the master key to an invasion. Although the Manchus were a land power, the regime they had set up began to feel the stress of the blockade, and the hearts of the Chinese people were with the gallant young leader.

It was finally decided that Cheng Kung was both too powerful to be allowed to remain and too powerful to be conquered. The day came when his father, "The Dragon", now a prisoner in Peking, was called upon to send peace terms to his son. The terms were that if Cheng Kung would agree to co-operate with the Manchu regime, he would receive the post of governor, similar to that formerly held by his father.

Cheng Kung did not keep the Manchus waiting long for a reply. He could not accept their offer, he said, because he felt that that position for him would not provide for his generals and their soldiers. This was merely a polite way of refusing, and to make it evident that he was still a power, he laid siege to three more coastal towns and occupied them.

All was not well, however, in his own camp. Many of his generals were jealous of his power, and scorned him because he had had no military education. Some of them deserted to the enemy, others begged him to make terms and refused to obey his orders. Cheng Kung was relentless with such persons. One after another he had them executed in the cause of China's security.

The Manchus were persistent. One morning in 1659 a messenger from the Manchu Emperor arrived bearing a friendly

invitation to Cheng-Kung to visit the Manchu capital. The message informed him that his father, "The Dragon", had been made a Duke and that his two brothers had been knighted. A similar honour awaited him if he would come for an audience. The message was couched in flattering terms.

Cheng-Kung decided to receive the envoy from the Manchu Emperor, but in his own territory. He constructed a fortification and, accompanied by his faithful bodyguard, awaited the arrival of the Manchu Emperor's envoy, a high-ranking general.

After the exchange of salutes, Cheng-Kung extended his hand to the Manchu. "Now I will read the Emperor's message," he said.

The haughty Manchu laughed disdainfully. "The message is indeed addressed to you," he said. "But you can only read it if you are a loyal Manchu subject. First you must shave your head, as do all loyal subjects of the Emperor, and wear a pig-tail and the Manchu costume. Only then I will allow you to read this message."

Cheng-Kung drew himself up to his full height and laughed in the general's face. Without a word he turned and marched back to his own camp, leaving the Manchu general hurling threats at him. Immediately he wrote to his father:

"... I have not written to you because I did not want to cause you trouble. I stand firm on my conviction that there can be no peace with the Manchus. When the order came to *make me governor*, I had explained the reason for my refusal, because the position did not make adequate provision for my aides and generals. When the Emperor's message came, I was not to be allowed to see it until I had shaved my head. . . Such nonsense is beyond my understanding. It is clear that the Manchu government is not sincere in its avowed intention to let China live. . . If I were to shave



my head even before being told what that government demands, would my hundreds of aides and generals have to shave their heads and wear pig-tails, and my tens of thousands of soldiers have to do the same? To make my men look ridiculous is to insult them. The messengers of the Manchus could not have thought their mission important if they were so ready to be insolent. You, my father, have fallen into the Manchu trap, and are lucky to have been allowed to live until now. They must want to let you live for some dark reason. If they kill you, I will do my best to take revenge on them and to perform my duty as a filial son and as a loyal Ming subject."

"The Dragon" never received the letter. It was intercepted by the spies and handed to the Manchu Emperor, who immediately ordered "The Dragon" and all his family to be imprisoned.

In the meantime, Cheng Kung fought on with greater fury and increasing power. His generals, however, told him he would never win a final victory unless he could smash the Manchu southern defence line. Thus he decided to do. His plan was to attack Nanking and Chungking along the Yangtse River, and thus divide the Manchu army into two parts. It was a bold and dangerous project, entailing long supply lines and the use of thousands of troops. Cheng Kung had confidence in his men. He did not realize that while they could fight for a short time on land and withdraw to their ships, few of them had the stamina or experience to undertake a long campaign inland. He was determined to take no chances, however, and drew up a lengthy training plan for the attack. In the midst of this, the Empire he was fighting for collapsed. The newly crowned Ming King, Kwei, had evacuated to Burma when Kwangtung Province fell to the Manchus, and there he had died. The Ming dynasty was ended. Cheng Kung had no King. Now he was

fighting for the lives of his men and himself. Misfortune, say the Chinese, always comes twice. From that moment on, Cheng-Kung endured blow after blow. His uncle, Hung-Kuei, who was helping him to plan the campaign, died suddenly, and the vengeful Manchus executed his father and all the other members of his family because he would not surrender.

But Cheng-Kung decided to fight on and to strike immediately. One morning his troops attacked the Manchus on a thousand-mile front, in what was undoubtedly one of the greatest military operations up to that time. But treachery had been at work. Someone had informed the Manchu generals of Cheng-Kung's plans, and at every point of attack his men were met by overwhelming forces. Beaten and battered, leaving more than half their number killed, Cheng-Kung and his men retreated and boarded their vessels.

Even in the hour of defeat, Cheng-Kung's spirit was not broken. He remembered the island of Formosa, where his father had risen to power and wealth; and so, the following morning, about a hundred of the ships anchored in the shallow bay of Formosa, then under Dutch rule. The Dutch were completely unprepared for the assault, and they surrendered after Cheng-Kung's men had cut off the island's water supply.

Cheng-Kung was a lenient and merciful conqueror. He forbade his men to loot or to kill the Dutch settlers. In a treaty signed on March 12, 1661, he allowed the Dutch to take everything they possessed on the island, including ships, food, ammunition and money, and even lent them vessels to carry their citizens to the East Indies.

Watching the sails of the ships disappear into the blue distance, Cheng-Kung made his decision. Here, on this island, he would build a powerful army and organize an ideal State.

His father had failed because he was greedy for power, because he loved money and peace more than his country. What his father had done he could *do* again, and would, but all in the interests of China

With his face turned to the sky, he took an oath of allegiance to Heaven and his beloved country

Cheng-Kung seems to have been remarkably successful as a governor and colonizer. In the space of a year, the "beautiful island" was flourishing under his rule. He had divided it into cantons or counties, each with its governor, law courts, schools and tax offices. Every man in his army learned agriculture as well as military tactics, while the women learned the domestic arts. Soon prosperity shone on the island like a warm summer sun, and there were no happier people in Asia than the inhabitants of Formosa, while across the ocean the Chinese groaned in the toils of the evil Manchus, who had ordered them to evacuate the whole coast and who were busily enslaving the ancient nation.

But Cheng Kung could not rest in the midst of all this prosperity. He thought of China and her dishonour, and vowed to banish the conquerors. The idea must have seemed fantastic to anyone but the young patriot. But he would never hear a word against his scheme. Whenever one of his generals expressed a doubt as to whether it was feasible, Cheng Kung ordered his execution. He spent his days and nights preparing for the campaign. He drilled his own soldiers, designed weapons and ships, and worked through the night drawing up combat orders and military plans. After he fell ill, he continued to direct the preparations from his bed. When he heard that his son had said he did not believe it was possible for the attack to succeed, he ordered his execution, and also that of his own wife, because she had not taught his son properly. His advisers, fearing he

had lost his mind, refused to carry out his orders. One day Cheng-Kung discovered this, and he knew that he was no longer master of his little kingdom when his orders were not carried out. His heart was broken. He got up from his bed, dressed himself in his general's robes, and, walking out into the sweet, warm sunshine, fell dead, a martyr to his own fierce patriotism. He was only thirty-seven years old.

Over his father's body, Cheng-Kung's son took an oath to continue to resist the Manchu government, and it was not until 1681 that the Manchu troops finally secured a footing on the island, which was seized by the Japanese in the year 1895. Not long hence this lovely spot may once again return to its ancient fatherland. But, in any event, the name of Cheng-Kung will always be remembered for the loyalty of the great man who bore it and for the desperate efforts he made to restore the Ming regime. His example is held up as a pattern for soldiers, both Japanese and Chinese. Gratifying indeed will it be to the soul of the doughty warrior if the young soldiers of modern China march once more on the soil of the beautiful island.

CHAPTER VIII  
A WOMAN RULER  
*THE DOWAGER EMPRESS*  
(1835 — 1908)  
*In the Manchu Dynasty*

*IT WAS* summer in Peking in the year 1900. The ancient city was still slumbering under its blanket of peaceful repose. The clear blue sky was tinted with the pale pink aura of the morning.

Peace, sunshine and a summer breeze, the gentle song of the morning wind singing in the trees, the larks and orioles sending out their sweet *cascades of song* over the rolling landscape

of ancient China, facing the new Western century and groaning in the iron grip of the Manchus

When the drums of war are laid aside, there is no city in the world that wears the mantle of peace more graciously than the ancient city of Peking, with its brightly coloured roofs, its temples its majestic avenues, its parks, lakes, hills and its wise old men and cultured young people. And who shall say there is any more beautiful building in the world than the great Yi Ho Yuan or Summer Palace of the Emperor — a mighty, cloistered domain comprising many buildings, placid silvery lakes, majestic hills and exotically cultivated gardens interlaced with pergolas, honeycombed with shaven lawns, and spangled with beds of bright flowers

But this morning no mighty Emperor slept in the imperial bed guarded by giant spearmen. In the inner chamber of the imperial quarters, East and West, were meeting in a strange way the mechanical wonders of the West, the fanciful whim of a mighty potentate of ageless China in the East

In an inner room of the palace fifteen clocks, imported from Europe, announced that it was six o'clock in the morning. They chimed and cuckooed, they played tunes, and one burred with respectful deference to the person whose desire had imprisoned them in the big room where they faced the great imperial bed covered by a heavy silk net. All the little clocks were in action as the hour arrived. There was one with a gay painted face from which a tiny bird appeared to sing a rondel. From another a number of tiny dolls emerged and danced round a windmill with slowly turning sails. On a third the Pied Piper of Hamelin gave forth his reedy notes. From the face of a fourth a merry-faced clown squeaked "Hullo-Hullo" six times.

The little clocks contributed to the discord that would have shocked the ghosts of the ancient emperors to whom the

occupant of the bed was surely more than ever a foreign devil with her imported noisemakers. And had you been present at this almost sacred moment, you might have stepped into the visiting room adjoining the bedroom. There, amid the formal dignity of its imperial furniture, huge pieces of scarlet lacquer and teakwood, eighty five more clocks large and small — on the size of a thrush's egg, another as large as a four wheeled carriage — contributed their part to the ceremony of waking the most powerful woman in China.

The Dowager Empress was awake. She sat on the bed that was surrounded on three sides by shelves and roofed by the net giving it the appearance of a small house. She smiled at the clocks she loved best, arranged on the shelves. They had finished their chiming and calling, leaving behind a soft silence through which their ticking emphatically threaded sharp little stitches of urgency, as if bidding the woman in the blue silk pajamas to be up and doing. Most people *would object to sleeping with* such a medley of ticking, but to the Dowager Empress these timepieces were the meat of life. She loved them only next to herself and, with the order of a collector, she had surrounded herself with more clocks than guards.

The maidservants stood by her bed. Outside, fifteen guards stood at attention, sleeplessly vigilant through the long night. Beyond the eighty five clocks in the outer chamber, forty more chosen sentries watched over the safety of the Empress of China, at the sound of whose name some men trembled and others spat.

With quiet efficiency the Empress washed and dressed. The maids arranged her hair, powdered her face with a powder reputed to be made of the ground dust of pearls and painted her wide full lips. Another brought the imperial breakfast, a glass of warm milk and a bowl of arrowroot porridge. The Empress ate without speaking. She then pushed the tray away and stood

up to be robed in her full ceremonial dress, in which she was to attend the session of the imperial court. Inspecting herself in the mirror, she smoothed her silky black hair and arranged the heavy ornamental comb

The dress was of fine silk, coloured in imperial yellow, cunningly woven with floral designs. Its skirts reached to the ground. The collar, the wide sleeves and the bottom were trimmed with dark yellow satin oversewn with pearls. The buttons were massive round green jade. Around her neck she wore a rope of magnificent graduated pearls, each interspaced with green jades, the whole supporting a ruby the size of a pigeon's egg, framed in more pearls. There were gold tassels on the hem of her dress and the lapels of her collar. Under her arm she carried a blue silk handkerchief embroidered in gold and a silken bag of perfumed powder.

A sharp tap of her heavy fan on the table, and the doors swung open. To her conference with her ministers went one of the strangest women who ever passed across the mighty scroll of Chinese history. That morning she had just reached her sixty-sixth birthday, but she held herself like a young girl, and even her most severe critics could not say that she looked more than forty years of age.

And not a single minister or lady in waiting could help wondering how it was that this woman who, fifty-nine years before, had come to the palace to serve as a maid to the Empress, had managed to climb to such a dizzy height and rule the Empire with a rod of iron.

Many things had happened to the court since a little Manchurian girl called No La had been brought with some three hundred others to work in the palace. As a young girl, No La wore a green palace uniform, her hair in a pigtail tied with a red silk bow to denote that she was earmarked for the



imperial service, and ran errands between her studies in reading and writing. Her life was like that of any other woman in the palace, but the child had personality, and soon the gossips learned that No La had been chosen as the Emperor's fifth wife.

When she gave birth to a son, her prestige in the palace increased. Later she was made Empress of the Western Palace, the equal of the first Empress, who lived in the Eastern Palace. Whether No La realized her good fortune then, no one can say.

She seems to have been a quiet, simple little thing, with an aptitude for making friends. The First Empress was a peaceful, quiet beauty who spent her time reading and writing and sewing. She had every reason to be jealous of the newcomer, but instead of showing any animosity, as was usual under such circumstances, she welcomed little No La with open arms. She proceeded to make her a close and intimate friend, helping her with her studies and showing her the kindness of a mother. Although the law at that time decreed that the Emperor could have several wives, as in the days of Moses among the tribes of Israel, there was usually keen rivalry and bitter feeling among the ladies which caused the Emperor much trouble. Here the situation was different, and the Emperor was delighted. No La was not flashingly beautiful, but she had grace and charm, and a capacity for acquiring knowledge and putting it to the best use. She was as happy in her new position as were the Emperor and Empress to have discovered a young companion so sweet and amiable.

But destiny was to play many tricks on the unsuspecting little girl. The years were to harden her heart and to call forth every ounce of ability and cunning she possessed. She was to find herself faced with many difficulties. She was to engage in a perpetual game, but she always managed to win at once or to retire and return to the game and win in the end.

Under her frail hands, which were in reality steel sinews of government, the great turbulent pageant of China's history plunged and struggled, threatened by internal strife, speared by foreign invasion, but always guided unfalteringly by the little woman in the Western Palace. On her, history still sits in judgment. Was she a wicked woman, or was she a patriot? Was she cruel and heartless, a murderess and a tyrant, or was she merely a woman doing her best in a position of terrible responsibility? Some historians rank her as high as England's great Queen Victoria, a fact of which she was extraordinarily proud; others blame her for China's terrible years to come. If, say her critics, she had not been such a lover of luxury, China would have entered the twentieth century as the dominant sea power of the Pacific, with Japan as a minor State. But then again, if that had happened, China's millions would still be groaning under the severest feudal law of modern times.

The story of her life resembles a motion picture conceived on an immense scale, far too great to be encompassed in a single book. To see her that morning, beautiful in her maturity, calm and dignified, the long, shapely fingers of her frail hands ending in five inch nails as strong as steel and enamelled a ruby red, one would not have thought that any woman could have endured so much and yet retained the outward appearance of youth.

With her husband, the Emperor, she had survived the Taiping Rebellion, a band of Chinese patriots tried to overthrow the Manchus. She had risked her life with her husband in the course of the hostilities between China and the Western powers. During that period her husband had died at Jehol, leaving her alone with her eight year old son. In this crisis No-La showed for the first time the inward greatness that was hers. Tung chi, her son, was too young to be Emperor. The ministers wanted to form a regency. No-La did not trust them. She knew

of the intrigues, the cunning and the greed of those close to the Emperor, of appeasers and traitors and secret factions. With the help of a loyal adviser, she proclaimed herself Regent and Dowager Empress, and took control of the government. From that day she was addressed as Dowager Empress.

Now, in her sixty-sixth year, she was known as "Old Buddha". She was hated and feared, but respected. She was still a little woman, but not a tired one. The fire of life burned brightly in her heart. Perhaps she had made mistakes, perhaps she had failed China in the hour of trial, but she was still the Dowager Empress, ruling a vast country, beset by enemies from within and without.

She had signed so many treaties that people said she did not know what she was doing, and that she had signed because she liked her own calligraphy. Through her influence, her husband had made an inglorious peace with England and France by the treaty of Tientsin, giving them treaty ports, extraterritoriality and free naval patrol of Chinese seas. That treaty lowered the prestige and strength of China, but for the Dowager Empress it was worth while. It saved her throne and increased her power. "Old Buddha" was really saving the Empire for her son. When he reached the age of eighteen, she withdrew to the privacy of her quarters and ruled through him. Then fate struck her a cruel blow. Her son died after ruling two years. Again there was no Emperor. Again there was confusion. Intrigue and jealousy raised their heads at the court like a foul and menacing Gorgon.

Who was to rule? Who could steer the ship of state through the new tempest ahead? The law of the Empire ordained that no woman could ever succeed to the throne. Succession should go to the dead Emperor's son or to his elder brother. No Li's son had no son or brother. She was determined that no one should ascend the throne unless he was loyal to the Manchu.



regime With a swift, deft stroke of statesmanship that surprised the plotters, she made an announcement The new Emperor was to be Kwang Hsu, the five year-old son of her sister

The next day she presented the little fellow to the assembled ministers Poor little Kwang Hsu, dressed in the stiff, heavy robes of state with a massive crown on his tiny, shaven head, knew little of what was going on While decrees were being read and the bearded men of state were discussing the problems of government, he fell asleep and remained so through the audience, a tired little boy No La knew that the situation was ridiculous, but the face of the Emperor was saved because the law decreed that no minister could look at the throne while making a report They had to keep their heads bowed and to kneel on taking their departure, so none could tell the story of the sleeping child without reflecting on his loyalty and etiquette

She knew, however, that on the child's behaviour depended the security of her rule Taking Kwang Hsu in hand, she scolded and disciplined him even to the extent of chastising him, in order to teach him his duties

And whenever he was at court, beside the throne was another chair where she herself sat, listened and directed So great was her influence, so powerful her hold over the court, that none dared criticize her or dispute her wishes In 1889 Kwang Hsu reached his eighteenth birthday.

He succeeded to the throne and proved himself a simple, dignified young man who carried out the wishes of his aunt to the letter "Old Buddha" still ruled, but only from behind the ivory screen.

Outside the palace, turmoil was rising Japan's power had been strengthened after the Meiji reform Korea had been in the throes of a violent revolution The Koreans appealed to both China and Japan for help. When the rebels were subdued, the

Japanese who came as liberators refused to leave the peninsula and turned on the Chinese troops. They captured all Korea and drove the Chinese into the sea. They occupied the Pascadores and extended their influence to the northeast and southeast of the China Sea. Europe and the United States of America were shocked to see that the little brown men could defeat a great Empire like China.

No-La came out of retirement to make another treaty, which ceded Korea to Japan, as well as Formosa and the Pascadores in the China Sea. China was to pay Japan an indemnity and to give Japan treaty ports. The treaty was a shameful sign of weakness, but to No-La again it meant peace. She was governing her Empire, but she did not know what was taking place outside the walls of her palace. In spite of her growing collection of clocks, she did not appreciate the significance of the industrial revolution in Europe and America, or of China's awakening to the rights of the common man. China had peace, even at the price of self-respect. She had lost a major war to a tiny island country that had been paying her homage since the dawn of history—a country with little more than a maritime consciousness, a borrowed language and an imitation of the culture of China.

But young Kwang-Hsu, the Emperor, was conscious of the disgraceful situation. He could not understand how it was that a little country like Japan could subdue the mighty majesty of China. For days he paced his rooms thinking of the problem. He read every book he could lay his hands on. He studied history, he sent for reports on Japan, and he came to the conclusion that the Emperor Meiji had been enlightened enough to profit by the advice of the American, Commodore Perry, and to modernize Japan.

That country had sent a mission to America. Japan had modernized itself. The decision came to the young Emperor

like a flash of lightning. He summoned his court. He made an announcement to the effect that China, too, must modernize herself with a view to restoring her prestige. He boldly invited those of his ministers who were progressive to submit their ideas. He himself began to study English and Japanese. He imported newspapers and magazines from Europe and America. He drew up a blueprint for a complete reform in the educational and governmental systems of the nation. The common man was to be set free, railways were to be built, and certain sections of the country were to be industrialized.

The result of these debates, however, caused a schism in the Cabinet. A few progressive ministers supported the young Emperor, the old conservatives opposed him. Although they dared not show their faces to the young man, they schemed to thwart his plans. The day came when the conservative ministers were admitted to the quarters of "Old Buddha." They lay on the floor in homage to the woman who had been their Empress in everything but name. They whispered and sighed and wept. "Old Buddha" snapped her ivory fan on the arms of her great lacquer chair. She croaked orders, she bade her faithful conservative ministers be at peace, and she acted.

The next morning six wise heads rolled in the dust outside of the courtyard, and the blood from six respected bodies made great, dark red patches on the ground. The flashing sword of the imperial executioner had dispatched the six ministers who supported the Emperor's proposed reforms. For a time at least, the danger of modernization was removed from the Empire of China. Kwang Hsu was missing from his quarter. The books he had studied were burned. The foreign newspapers he had been reading came no more to the palace. Armed guards had taken him to Ying Tai, where he was virtually a prisoner.

"Old Buddha" again presided over the court. She signed more documents, issued more decrees. She was at the peak of her power and her beauty.

Power, dignity, wealth and a striking, if not complete beauty were hers. She attended the imperial councils decked in the most costly finery her Empire could provide. She bathed and washed painstakingly. Special beauty doctors prepared lotions to preserve her flawless skin. She dressed her hair in the most elaborate way, conceived by herself, parted in the middle, combed to the sides, with two wings protruding from each side of her head like those of a giant bird. In these she wore pearls and flowers, usually white jasmine, the fragrance of which she loved passionately. On the right wing she would hang eight strings of priceless pearls that dropped to her shoulder, on the left a garland of flowers clipped together with diamonds, rubies and jades.

Her daily arrival at the court was a ceremony unequalled in the history of pomp and extravagance. Outside her bedroom were eight ladies in waiting from noble families. As soon as she emerged, they formed an escort on either side, two of them supported her by the elbows. Fifty young girls in green uniforms assembled in front of the procession, carrying green gauze lanterns. Ahead, the chamberlain and the armed guards marched with slow and steady step down the lengthy corridor leading to the throne room where the royal family, led by Kwang Hsu's young and beautiful wife, waited. Instantly the ranks of the attendants parted and all present knelt, face to the floor, and sang in unison "*Lao Fu Yeh Wan Foo*, which, translated, means "A thousand cheers, Old Buddha."

Slowly, unsmiling, her head held high, the Dowager Empress walked to the huge carved red lacquer chair set in the middle of the room on a raised platform. As usual, when she



sat down, the eighty five clocks she had installed in the family throne room began to strike seven - the chimes, the gongs, the cuckoos, the dolls, the pipe organs, the musical clocks. If the clocks began the moment she sat down - and time was her God - the Dowager would smile, if they were late, if she was late, she would be furious, and on her mood depended the heads and well being of those who served her.

The mornings began with greetings from the family. First the young Empress would humble herself. Then, in order of rank and prestige, every member of the royal family followed. Like Queen Victoria of England, "Old Buddha" kept the closest watch over her court ladies. Each had to dress according to her station. Married women with their husbands wore dark red dresses, those engaged wore bright red, widows wore blue. And woe betide any unfortunate whose hair was out of place, whose face was poorly made up, whose toilet had been hurried.

After the greetings, the Dowager would inspect the room. She would take notice of every clock, to see whether it was straight on the wall and in its proper place. Every flower vase came up for inspection. The whole room had to be fragrant with fresh flowers or her wrath was terrible. Every window had to be wide open in winter as well as in summer, and the incense in the bowls in her prayer room to the left of the throne had to be burning.

Two strange pictures decorated the throne room. In massive steel frames burnished to mirror brightness were photographs of Queen Victoria in full dress, her ample bosom glittering with decorations. In another was the same old queen with the Prince Consort and their many children. For a minute or more every day, the Dowager Empress would gaze at these two pictures, nod to them, and pray for a long life. To her the features of Queen Victoria, the woman who ruled the British Empire, betokened long life and abundance. No-La wanted the same.

This morning there was a new face at this ponderous ceremony. From a side door, escorted by gigantic guards with pigtailed and long mustaches there came a tall, thin young man in his early thirties. He was clean shaven. As a Manchurian, he had to remain so until he was forty. His calm, composed face was lined with sorrow. He came forward to pay homage to "Old Buddha", but he never reached the point of kneeling. The Dowager got up, left her throne, and grasped him by the hand. The Emperor Kwing Hsu was back, restored by the grace of the all-powerful one. Quietly and with great dignity, No La led him to the morning session of the imperial court, excluding the rest of the family. The ministers knelt. They chanted "*Tai Hao Huang-Ti Wang Su*", which in English means "Long live the Dowager Empress and the Emperor".

There was to be joint rule. The Dowager sat on a yellow throne carved in the form of two dragons, the Emperor at her right on the other imperial throne.

First, one of the kneeling ministers gave a lengthy oral report of what had happened in the nation during the past twenty-four hours. The organization of the Boxer armies, now under the official auspices of the Manchus and important cabinet ministers, was well under way. The Chinese revolutionists, led by Sun Yat Sen, had been wiped out in Kwangtung Province. The Boxers were a band of superstitious, religious fanatics who believed that with the help of the spirits in heaven they could resist the modern Western bullets and cannons. Aware that in recent years the Manchu dynasty had been badly and shamefully defeated by foreign forces, their creed was "to wipe out the foreigners and help to strengthen the Manchu dynasty."

The Dowager Empress and her ministers had been quick to appreciate the value of the uprising and authorized these superstitious bands to organize and arm themselves. The Boxers

had begun to attack and destroy all that was "foreign". They burnt foreign churches, killed missionaries, destroyed railroads, cut telegraph wires, and searched houses. Any private property that was "foreign," whether books or umbrellas, clocks or watches, was burnt and the owners killed. Thousands of innocent people had been killed in the provinces of Shantung and Hopei and in the neighbouring towns and cities. All through China there was intense hatred of "the foreigners", since the Manchus had lost so many wars and paid so much in indemnities that came from the rice bowls of the people. The following of the Boxers grew enormously, and soon even the noble Manchus believed in their magic resistance to guns and bullets.

The reports sounded good to the Dowager Empress. Secretly she may have wished that the Boxers would chase all the foreigners out. It was an easy way to deal with the trouble without involving herself and if trouble did come, she had restored the Emperor to his throne.

Then a telegram was handed to her. Eight foreign countries, including England, Russia, France, Germany, the United States, Japan, Italy and Austria had sent troops to China. The invasion forces had landed in Tientsin, a port about a hundred miles from Peking, the capital. The combined troops had come 'to protect their citizens against the Boxers'. The Dowager Empress read this, and her face grew suddenly tense. This meant trouble, and trouble with foreigners was a menace to her comfort and power. She passed the telegram to the Emperor. His face was troubled, too. He may have remembered how "Old Buddha" had refused to let him continue with his reforms. If China had had the modern arms he had dreamed of she would have been prepared to resist.

There was a moment's silence. Neither the Dowager Empress nor any of the ministers spoke. Another messenger

arrived. A sealed envelope marked "Confidential" was given to the Dowager Empress. She opened it with her usual charm and steadiness. The letter said that three days previously one of the victims killed by the Boxers was the German Ambassador. The unfortunate incident had happened in the main thoroughfare of the city of Peking. The allied troops at Tientsin, led by a German general, were demanding the life of the Dowager Empress as compensation, and were pushing their way to the capital. The dispatch said they were equipped with the most up to date weapons, and that the situation was very critical.

The Dowager Empress sat rigid. The news was the worst she had yet had. She remembered those horrible days when she and her husband had to flee to Jehol from the combined troops of England and France. She remembered, too, how her husband had died from the rigours of his flight. An army from two countries was bad enough. Now that there were eight, the new forces must be huge indeed. She fainted, her hands still maintaining a grip of steel on the arms of the throne. When she came to, she passed the letter to the Emperor.

Finally the Dowager Empress spoke. She briefly communicated to her ministers the contents of the letter and asked their advice.

One of the Dowager Empress's confidants knelt before her and spoke. Since the situation was tense, he suggested that Her Majesty and the Emperor should remain in the summer palace till matters had been arranged. The summer palace, he said, was at least sixteen miles from the capital. If the combined forces had entered Peking, it would still allow Her Majesty time to find refuge elsewhere. The suggestion seemed good, but the Dowager Empress could not make up her mind. Her spirit was accustomed to overcome difficulties. She would not admit defeat on the advice of a minister. Angrily she dismissed her court and retired to her own quarters. It was eleven o'clock.

Back in her palace, the ladies in-waiting followed closely behind her, watching every step Her Majesty took, weighing every gesture. She gave them the sign that she wanted to change. They rushed to the closet, took out an embroidered light blue silk dress, and helped the Dowager Empress to change into her rest robe. No La hated her yellow imperial robe. Blue she adored. Only because tradition decreed that yellow was the imperial colour would she wear the yellow robe to attend the morning session every day.

Like all Manchurians, she enjoyed as refreshment the sweet nectar made from ground almonds. A bowl of this warm, white, delicious beverage was put on the table. She sipped at it first, then drank the whole bowl. She called for another. Then a little bowl like water pipe was brought to her. She took short little puffs. A lady in waiting refilled the bowl with Chinese tobacco. After every puff, she relaxed comfortably in the reclining chair by the window in her boudoir and began to consider the situation. The report of the advance of the European troops was disturbing. What would be the best thing to do for her own safety and for the prestige of the nation?

Problem after problem revolved in her mind like ivory balls clashing over a billiard table, striking the sides and hitting all the corners but in the end remaining on the table. What could she do? A foreign invasion was more formidable than she. The situation could be fatal to her if she did not handle it properly. She was old and alone now. She could not stand another exile. Were the combined troops as powerful as the report had said? Some coward might be lying. But what if they should burst through the defences and occupy Peking? Her own life and safety would be in danger if she fell into the hands of those angry Europeans. They were already demanding her life in compensation for that of the murdered German Ambassador.

If she left the capital, the Emperor would accompany her, the people would say she had deserted them. And how far would the Europeans go from there? Peking was the heart of the nation. If the capital fell, the morale of the whole nation would be broken.

The ladies in waiting noticed that her face was tense and that her lips were drawn in a tight line, but they could not know what was going on in the Dowager Empress's mind. To them "Old Buddha" was just in a temper. They continued to fill the water pipe. Now one of them lighted an imported cigarette and placed it in a long cigarette holder, which she offered to the Dowager Empress, whose feet now rested on the couch. One of the ladies in waiting leaned forward to remind the Dowager Empress that the wives of the diplomatic corps in Peking had been invited to the garden party. Would the Dowager Empress or the young Empress act as hostess? The Dowager Empress was rarely present at such functions. She liked to eat alone, but the questions had to be put as a formality.

If the Dowager Empress was not going to eat with the Ambassadors' wives, would she like to have her lunch now or later? the lady in waiting continued to ask.

She would have lunch in the boudoir and dinner was to be served on the silver service because the silver would turn black if there was poison in the food. Only the Emperor and the young Empress used the gold dinner service. After lunch she went to bed to take her regular afternoon nap.

At about four in the afternoon, she sat in front of her mirror tidying her hair and applying almond cream to her hands and face. If she did not handle this crisis properly, she would lose face. Solve the problem she must. She would think about it at length in her rowboat on the huge private lake of her summer palace.

The lake was in the middle of the extensive palace grounds. On the north bank was a big grassy mountain. To the southeast were the summer residences of the royal families and the ministers. To the south was a magnificent esplanade with a stone pavement engraved in almond floral patterns. The railings were made of white marble to match the flight of steps leading to the Temple of a Thousand Buddhas where the imperial family worshipped. The surface of the lake was dotted with tiny islands. The largest of these was in the middle, connected with the mainland by a bridge with seventeen rainbow circles.

For her quiet reverie the Dowager Empress took her whole retinue. Two boats each with twenty-four maids and servants, led the way towing the imperial barge with the Dowager Empress sitting in the centre. Three more boats came behind with more maids and servants all standing in honour of the Dowager Empress. For hours she sipped her tea and smoked her cigarettes occasionally nibbling sugar-coated fruits and candies. In the boats directly behind her musicians were playing. She found it disturbing and ordered the musicians to stop and the procession moved slowly all through the warm summer afternoon the only sound being the splash of the oars.

The Dowager Empress looked at the green hills to the north. She turned to gaze at the colourful yellow-roofed buildings to the southeast. Her hands were busy making a white jasmine crown to ornament her hair. How beautiful the white jasmynes smelled how enchanting they looked! Life was very pleasant. It was all so worth while. She was pleased that she had expended the millions of dollars this place had cost for such moments as this.

To her mind there could never have come the thought that was seething in the minds of the Chinese people and in the hearts of her ministers. Years before in order to hold Japan and the foreign invaders at bay it had been decided that China was

to have a powerful navy Ironclad battleships and guns were to be purchased from Russia and England, thousands of sailors were to be trained The navy was to cost a great deal of money To pay for it, special taxes were levied and collected

And then the Empress had decided that she had a better use for the several million dollars Battleships were ugly things The English and the French troops had looted and destroyed the former summer palace, beautiful Yuan Ming Yuan She would build a better one She had done so This summer palace, with its miles of grounds its monuments its lakes ranked as one of the four most magnificent palaces in the world Queen Victoria of England had nothing like it Let them burn Peking She still had this paradise

But suppose they were to burn and loot this palace! Never, never would she allow it! A butterfly settled on her hand She watched the little creature's quivering wings and forgot the enemy The butterfly made her think of flowers She ordered the boat ashore so that she could walk in her flower garden

Presently she came to a slope about sixty feet high laid out in terraces of flower beds They were planted with rich and gorgeous peonies purple yellow maroon red pink and white blazing like a resplendent carpet in the afternoon sun Their fragrance perfumed the air for miles around The palace folk had named the place the flower mountain Nowhere else in the world was there such an exotic view

The Dowager Empress loved flowers and this afternoon she felt like sharing her pleasure with the others No one was allowed to see or touch any fruit or flowers in the summer palace before the Dowager Empress had seen them This day the beauty of the flowers softened her heart She called her servants and gave orders that some of these flowers were to be picked and distributed to everyone around her even to the servants And so



the colourful peonies were plucked from the hill of flowers to adorn the hair and lapels of more than a hundred men and women in the party. The air was fragrant and sweet. The Peking sky was spotlessly blue, and smiles of pure delight came over the faces of everybody who stood beside the saddened, aged Dowager Empress. The world indeed seemed wonderful. Heaven had melted the heart of the mighty one.

At this moment the Dowager Empress's most trusted male servant, Li Lien Ying, a wrinkle-faced man, some seventy years old, dashed to her side with a telegram in his hand. She had given orders that she was not to be disturbed with political affairs after the morning sessions. But Li Lien Ying, who was her confidant, had dared to break the rule. Although a humble servant, he, more than anyone else in the palace except the Dowager, had his finger in national affairs to his own advantage. Even the most important ministers had to bribe him to obtain an audience with the Dowager.

The telegram said that the combined troops had reached Feng Tai, a town about fifty miles from Peking. They would push their way through to the capital within a week or two.

The telegram annoyed the Dowager. What a burden life could be when she had almost forgotten her troubles! She ordered that she be taken immediately to her living quarters.

As she strolled along the banks on her way back to her own living quarters, she passed by the kennels where she kept her imperial breed of Pekingese dogs. There were hundreds of them, each of which she knew by name. As she passed the gates of the kennels, the dogs barked and wagged their tails to welcome her. Immediately she forgot her mood. With dogs at least she had understanding and sympathy. She stepped into one of the cages and took one of the little dogs in her arms. "Mi La, Mi La, my dear Mi La," she cried, cuddling the dog, which was so called because he had the colour of *mi la* (bees wax). When she put him

down, a servant immediately handed her a wet, warm towel to clean her hands and everyone wondered. Never before had the high and mighty one taken a dog in her arms. Dogs were low animals. "Old Buddha" was almighty and supreme. Why had she touched a dog to-day? Certainly she was in a strange mood. This afternoon she did not want to go to the theatre either which was her love and passion. She went back to her living quarters.

That evening the Dowager Empress was still determined to forget her troubles. She called the Empress and two other girls to play dice. In this particular game you play on a board on which are inscribed the twelve animals of the zodiac — the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, snake, horse, ram, monkey, chicken, dog and pig. The players toss the two dice used, then score the total of the two dice on the chart. If the number happens to be on the sign of the dog, the score is marked on all dog signs on the board, the aim of each player being to reach the centre of the board. Usually the Dowager Empress won, but because of her position she would rarely take any money from the players. If she lost, she always paid what she owed. To play with her, therefore, was very profitable.

During this game one of the girls kept losing. Finally she lost her temper, because she had no money to pay her losses. The Dowager Empress was angry. She stopped the game and lectured the players, telling them that there was no difference between winning and losing. Then she collected her own winnings and went back to her rooms leaving the players aghast. But she could not sleep. The great problem was how to meet the advancing troops. All night she tossed and turned. Presently she heard a cat meowing outside. It sounded as if it was calling for something. 'Cats! the Dowager roared in anger. 'They are the most ungrateful of animals. Who let the cat in here? I

hate cats!" She called her servant waiting outside. There was no cat. She resumed her meditation.

She remembered what she had said to the girls at the game "Winning and losing are the same — all part of the game." Winning and losing all part of the game! That was life. Life was a game. Some played it with love and sincerity, others played it with hate and selfishness. But she was different. She did not play with the dice of love or hate. She played with power and dignity, and she would continue to play that way. Keep on the same way — that was the solution of her problem. Having made her decision, she gradually fell asleep.

The following morning, at court, she issued orders that the entire imperial family and the court be immediately moved to Peking. "When foreign troops are approaching," she said, "the morale of the people needs strength and support." As the head of the nation, she would go back to the capital to show the people that their situation was not so bad as it might seem.

The same day, at noon, carts, sedan chairs and horse carriages were coming out of the summer palace in an endless stream. Those painted an orange colour were occupied by the wives of the Emperor and his brothers. In the red-coloured ones there rode the other members of the royal family and the high ranking officials. Others rode in blue carriages. In the middle of the procession were three yellow carriages, one occupied by the Dowager Empress, one by the Emperor, and another by his wife.

The Dowager Empress really thought that her going back would keep up the morale of the civilians as well as that of the soldiers resisting the enraged invaders. She did not realize that the trouble caused by the Boxers had gone too far and that there was no way of appeasing the enemy or gaining a victory overnight. She was caught totally unprepared when, a week later,

the news came that the European soldiers were already in the city. For the first time in her life, she was really frightened. What if she should fall into the hands of the enemy? There was not a moment to lose. She must get away as quickly as possible. But she was no ordinary woman. How could she escape without attracting the attention of the invaders or of rebellious traitors?

Hurriedly she cut off her five-inch finger nails and took off her imperial robe. In its place she put on a peasant woman's rough blue cotton costume. She called the Emperor, and with a few trusted soldiers in civilian clothes she left the palace quietly. There was no time for her to remove her treasures or even to hide them. The only thing she carried was a small parcel of jewels and clothes. The invaders were at the gates of the British Embassy, two miles from the palace.

The city was in absolute chaos. Fighting and looting were going on. Buildings were in flames. Finally the Empress and her party reached Sian. For a year she and the few who followed her into exile endured the greatest hardships. At times there was not even enough food. The comfort and luxury of yesterday were merely dreams she had left behind.

The next year a truce was signed. The terms included a huge indemnity of \$ 333,000,000 plus four per cent interest to fourteen countries that had participated actively or inactively in the war — Russia, Germany, France, England, Japan, the United States, Italy, Belgium, Austria, Holland, Spain, Portugal, Sweden and Norway. When the combined troops had withdrawn and the Dowager Empress returned to Peking, it seemed to her that she had lived a million years. The wreckage in her palace made the place unrecognizable. She had lost her rare collection of jewellery and art objects, which was irreplaceable, and she missed her clocks most of all.

Her indomitable courage and her pride, however, came to the rescue of her broken spirit. It was good to be back home again. Here was comfort and here were the relics of her former power. China had suffered and been disgraced, but she had lived. She was still "Old Buddha."

There was no sorrow in her heart. In her ruined summer palace she walked amid her flowers, planning and hoping. She would modernize China. She would build railways, dockyards, cities, create an army and a navy. Education would be free.

It was two years later before this strange old woman, still beautiful, still powerful, her nails grown to their accustomed length, signed the promulgation of the order to modernize China, to open its ports to voluntary foreign trade, and to send Chinese young men and women abroad to study.

Five years later she died, aged seventy-five. It almost seemed as if she could see into the future. If she were to die, the regime must continue as she had planned. Her time was near. She could not trust Emperor Kwang Hsu because he had ideas of his own. The moment she had passed to her ancestors, he would dictate a different policy to the government. She saw it all so clearly. A few days before her own death, she stood over the corpse of Kwang Hsu, Emperor of China. She had poisoned him. Staring at his lifeless form, a faint smile on her face, still innocent of wrinkles, she wore her robe of imperial yellow. Her hair was carefully dressed. There were more clocks on the walls in her private quarters. There was another picture of Queen Victoria, whom she had outlived. She was again Empress of China, "Old Buddha," "Old Ancestor," all powerful.

But her life was ebbing and she knew it. Time was short and there was much to be done. A successor had to be found. To succeed her she appointed Henry Pu Yi, the baby brother of Kwang Hsu, then only four years old. As Regent in case of her

death she appointed her favourite brother-in-law. A few days later, she awoke at six o'clock. The little clocks newly imported from America, Britain and Switzerland were chiming. She smiled as she closed her eyes, never to open them again. It was the year 1908. New China was around the corner. "Old Buddha" had outlived her time.

Three years after her death, which ended her dynasty, the regime she had nurtured so painstakingly crashed in flames and crumbled to ashes. Had she known during the last five years of her life what was happening outside the palace walls, had she listened to information that came to her, she might have committed another sin by wiping out more forcibly the leader of the people's revolution, Sun Yat-Sen, and thus forging for another century the chains that were rusting on the wrists of New China. She might even have adopted a different philosophy of life before her death, but the will of God is stronger than the hand of man or woman, and virtue always triumphs in the end, as the old Chinese say.

To-day Henry Pu-Yi, the only remnant of "Old Buddha's" dynasty, is a voiceless puppet of the Japanese, living on borrowed time, as China grows ever stronger and more resolute.

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CHAPTER IX

NEW CHINA

*SUN YAT SEN*

(1866 — 1925)

ONE cool autumn day in October 1896, a slight professor like Chinese was walking down dignified Devonshire Street in the heart of the fashionable West End of the historic city of London. He was going towards the church where he was to meet a friend,

Dr James Cantlie As he strolled along the street, he was conscious that people were staring at him with interest because there were very few Chinese in the English capital But he was becoming accustomed to that, and this morning particularly the stares did not bother him There were far weightier and more important matters on his mind He was planning another revolution to overthrow the ignorant and tyrannical government of his own country

The first uprising planned by this mild little man had failed Many of his friends had already lost their lives But he was persistent in his belief in liberty and equality for all He was determined to pursue his aim until that tyrannical government crumbled to ashes The fact that he had devoted his life to this cause explained why he was in exile from China He had little hope of getting substantial help from the Chinese in London because there were so few of them But the British had shown sympathy with the Poles and the Hungarians and other nations in their struggle for freedom He felt that some kind hearted English men and women might be willing to make him a loan that would enable him to work for the freedom of millions of oppressed people in China He had already succeeded in raising money in other parts of the world In Japan Hawaii and the United States he had gained the help and sympathy of the progressive elements among both Chinese and non Chinese Once he had gathered all the help and money he could get abroad, he would immediately go back to China to carry on his revolutionary work

All at once he came face to face with a Chinese They belonged to the same nation, were Orientals, but they did not know each other It seemed an occasion for a polite smile The other man stopped and politely asked the little man in English whether he was a Japanese or a Chinese The little man was not



wearing a pigtail as the other Chinese of the period did. He had a small mustache and looked very smart in his European clothes. He was thirty years of age.

He told the other man he was a Cantonese from China. Immediately the two began to speak in their own dialect, Cantonese. As they walked and talked in the street, another Chinese joined them. The two strangers invited the little man to visit them at their lodging. He thanked them for the invitation which he, however, declined. He had to meet a friend of his in a nearby church, he explained. But the explanation was useless. The two strangers insisted. They almost led him along between them, and presently they came upon still another Chinese. Immediately the first one left them. Outside a large gray house at the corner of Portland Place, they stopped. Then, without warning, the two strangers, one on each side, compelled the little man to enter the house. The door was opened suddenly as if someone in the house had been expecting their arrival. The little man thought nothing of this except that his friends were very pressing with their hospitality, until the door was suddenly locked behind him. Then he realized that he was in the Chinese Legation. He was in China — in London — a prisoner of the Manchus. The men he had met had been a lure. The legation had received orders from home to kidnap this dangerous revolutionary and to send him home for execution.

Who was this man that the Chinese Legation in London was so eager to kidnap? Why did the Manchu government in China place a high price on his life? He was no other than Dr. Sun Yat Sen, known to the Chinese as Sun Wen, a fervent lover of the people and defender of their rights, a dangerous enemy of the corrupt Manchu government, and a revolutionist at heart. Ten days before, he had arrived in London from New York via Japan and Honolulu to raise funds to continue his attempt to

overthrow the Manchu dynasty. He had been warned of a plot to kidnap him when he was in the United States, but little did he think the trap would close on him in London instead. Yet here he was, in peaceful, orderly London, a helpless prisoner behind bars, and none of his friends knew of his arrest.

The events leading up to the kidnapping are a dramatic chapter in China's history, the struggle of one small, almost diminutive man to free a nation of 450 000 000 people, the saga of the endeavours of a loyal Chinese to carry on the work in which many others had failed.

Sun Yat Sen was born in a little village called Tsui Heng in the southeastern tip of China near the peninsula of Macao. He was the younger son of a farmer, and showed no unusual talent or ambition in his early years. Like other boys in the village he was sent to an old fashioned school where he learned to read and write in the old fashioned way by reading words aloud, reciting them one by one, with his back turned to the teacher. After a few years of this old fashioned education, he had learned a few thousand words. His elder brother was doing well as a merchant in Honolulu and wrote home to the family to send his younger brother there for a modern education. Young Sun Yat Sen therefore left home for the Hawaiian Islands when he was thirteen and studied English in a boarding school conducted by an English priest. In studying English history he was deeply impressed by Magna Charta and the English people's struggle for freedom. Fascinating too he found the development of constitutional government in England. When he returned home to Tsui Heng five years later, he was consumed with the idea of freedom and the rights of the individual.

Those five years of study in the Hawaiian schools had made young Sun Yat Sen a different person. Hundreds and thousands of other young boys were sent to Hawaii for schooling but in

Sun Yat Sen alone were planted the seeds of profound discontent with the lot of the people of China. Young Sun had almost forgotten what his own people were like. He had been away from China so long. He observed the customs and the superstitions of the natives of his village with new and astonished eyes. That people could be content to live that way shocked him. Shortly after his return, he met a friend of his youth, Lu Ho Tung, who had just come back from Shanghai. In Lu he found an understanding comrade who shared his own ideas on the liberty of the common man. With this bond to link them, they soon became as close to each other as if they were brothers. As Cantonese, they intensely hated the alien Manchus.

Like other hot headed young people, they often engaged in vehement discussions on the corruption of the Manchu government. Both of them had lived under tolerant Western rule, and they saw no reason why its beneficent influence should not extend to China. Particularly irksome to them were the village superstitions and customs and the abysmal ignorance of their parents. When the Taiping Rebellion failed, they were plunged into despair, when they were forced to submit to the village customs and worship at the village temple they rebelled.

In a fit of rage the two did a dreadful thing. They went to the temple where the villagers worshipped their ancestors, and wrecked the images of the gods. Such desecration was unpardonable. The shocked villagers held a council over the two delinquents and expelled them.

Lu Ho Tung went back to Shanghai, while Sun Yat-Sen proceeded to Canton, where he wandered homeless and hungry in the streets for days before he met a physician connected with the Anglo American Hospital. The doctor talked to him of his work. Listening, Sun Yat-Sen became fascinated with the idea

of being able to save lives. He decided to study medicine and become a surgeon. But his parents had other ideas. First he must come home to marry the girl of their choice. Then, if he behaved himself, he could go to Hongkong to enter the medical school. He decided to obey and returned. A few days after his marriage, he returned to his studies, leaving his wife at the home of his parents.

At the College of Medicine in the University of Hongkong, Sun Yat Sen devoted himself to his work. He was interested only in his studies and his dream of serving and enlightening his people. A reserved young man, he made few friends. One of them was Dr. James Cantlie, an English surgeon who took a great interest in the studious Chinese boy.

Upon graduation, Sun Yat Sen practised surgery in Macao and Canton, but whenever he came upon a difficult case, he would call for help from his teacher, Dr. Cantlie, who invariably answered his call. "Why did I go to Macao to help this man?" Dr. Cantlie once asked himself in later years. He answered himself thus: "For the same reason that others have fought and died for him — because I loved and respected him."

During the years Sun Yat Sen was studying to become a surgeon, momentous things were happening in China. The Manchus had fought a war with England and France and lost, through the ignorant foreign policy of the luxury-loving Dowager Empress. While Sun Yat Sen disapproved of the Manchu rule, China was his country after all, and he was very much concerned about the declining tendency of his nation's destiny. While he was practising as a doctor, he continued to discuss with his friends the problem of how to make China, through liberal reforms, a modern nation.

In Macao, men were free to talk of the evils existing in their own country, because the crowded little peninsula was a

Portuguese settlement Not only did Sun Yat Sen talk, he wrote, he owned a newspaper in Macao called *Chi Hsin Pao*, which means "The Newspaper of the Renovation" So bright, so outspoken was the little sheet that it attracted attention from the old and the young It also aroused considerable opposition Some people believed in the little doctor, some despised him He came to be nicknamed *Sun Ta Pao*, meaning "Big Cannon Sun," because he was always making long speeches and a lot of noise The nickname did not worry him Whether he was "Big Cannon Sun" or not, his enthusiasm for the truth grew and he was ever ready to talk to an interested audience

Above all else, he was a patriot When a war with Japan was imminent in 1893, Sun Yat Sen thought it his duty to offer his knowledge to the existing government He made a special trip to Peking, where he submitted a memorandum with his plan for a modern State to the then great but conservative statesman, Li Hung Chang The plan was ignored Sun Yat Sen was furious How could men be so blind when the nation's welfare was at stake? He would force the adoption of his programme or die in the attempt Sun Yat Sen gave up his medical career There were more important things to be done than treating sick people for a few dollars Saving lives one by one was a slow process If he could free his nation, he would benefit millions

Realizing that his formula would never be used by the Manchus, he set out for Honolulu, where he had many friends who, he hoped, would support him Many did In the course of a year, he managed to organize the *Hsing Chung Hui*, the Society for the Restoration of China, won enough followers and collected enough money to start a revolution In 1895, back he went to China, which had recently been defeated by Japan, with the corruption of the Manchu regime exposed to the whole world like an ugly scar

The time seemed propitious for winning the nation over to his side. Working night and day with trusted aides, he prepared an armed uprising intended to capture the city of Canton and hold it as a base of the revolution. Traitors gave him away. The government rushed back to Canton, and the uprising failed. More than seventy of the revolutionists were arrested. Among those executed was Dr. Sun's best friend, Lu Ho Tung, who, as a madcap student, had joined him in defying the gods in the village temple.

The loss of his friends was a severe blow to the little doctor, but it sharpened his resolution to try again. He escaped to Japan, then to Honolulu. From there he went to the United States and to England, determined to raise funds to start another revolution. He had been warned, while he was in the United States, that the Manchu government had agents trailing him, but he never thought that London could offer any danger.

Imagine his thoughts as the door of the house in Portland Place closed behind him and he came face to face with the black robed, pigtailed servants of the Chinese Legation, brutal strong arm warriors specially chosen for their work. The Manchu government knew that he was the instigator of their troubles, and they were determined to do away with him at all costs, even to the extent of flouting international law.

Roughly the guards flung him into a small room upstairs in the rear of the building. They placed a guard in the courtyard below and another in the passage. The legation staff were sworn to secrecy. The dark, sinister house over which floated the Imperial Dragon flag was shrouded more than ever in mystery.

The only person in the whole of London who knew of the little man's presence in the city and his non arrival at his appointment was the kindly, rugged old Dr. James Cantlie, then

living in retirement Sun Yat Sen was his house guest at the time, and the two old friends were to have met in the quiet little church in Devonshire Street and later to take lunch together. The doctor waited in vain

In the meantime, the officials of the legation were gloating over their capture. They cabled Peking, and back came the answer. The prisoner was to be sent to China to pay the penalty of his crimes. But to take a free man prisoner and put him aboard a liner presented a problem even for the Manchu officials. While Sun Yat Sen was in the legation, they could do pretty much as they liked, since it was virtually Chinese soil, but once they were outside, anything might happen. He might call out and attract the attention of a passing policeman. British law gave him the right of protection, whatever his race, creed or political beliefs. No British shipping line would be a party to such a procedure, but there were other lines. Where the berth was reserved is not known, but there was to unfold a drama that ranks with the fabulous doings of Sherlock Holmes, whose historic Baker Street was only a few blocks away.

The little doctor was a fighter, but he had nothing to fight with. He flung himself against the door, he battered at the window, he threatened and stormed, all to no avail. Then, realizing that the fate of man lies in the hands of God, he decided to commend his troubles to the Lord of Heaven. Instead of resisting and wasting his energy, he knelt in prayer, searching his heart and strengthening his faith. God had never before deserted him, such a thing could not happen. On the seventh day, there came to him a feeling of great comfort. Although there seemed to be no means of escape, he found he was no longer afraid. He was using his mind correctly, and it seemed as though a message had reached his heart. Escape was near at hand.

He began to study his position with new hope. There was a small window on the north side of the room. From it he could

see only the roofs of the houses, but no friendly windows to which he could signal. Below, in the yard, was a guard. The street was some distance off. The old house, after the fashion of the English houses of the day, was completely detached.

If only he could get a message to Dr. Cantlie! Determined to try, he wrote some messages on tiny slips of paper and let them float out of the window on the breeze. Then he wrote others, wrapped them in coins, and hurled them as far away as he could, praying that each one would fall into the hands of some kindly person who would deliver it to the good doctor who had once told him that God helps those who help themselves.

But all in vain! The armed guard had seen the messages, with the result that the window was nailed up. The Chinese officials came no more to see the prisoner. His food was brought to him by an English butler.

The butler was intrigued by the little man. He could not understand how such a gracious, charming person could be guilty of murder. One of the Chinese servants had told him that the prisoner was going back to China to be hanged or beheaded, and to the simple Englishman that could mean only one thing — that he had killed someone.

By listening and picking up fragments of conversation, he gathered that the prisoner would shortly be on his way to his death, and he was touched that such a thing should happen to a God-fearing person. But when Sun Yat-Sen made a desperate plea that he take a message to Dr. Cantlie, the butler became frightened at the thought of becoming involved in such a dangerous affair. If the Manchus found out, they might kill him, too. Like all Englishmen of the period, he looked on the Chinese as sinister, lawless people. Every night he told his wife what was happening at the legation, and said that he would like to do something for the little man.



His wife listened. Then she got up and said "Henry, if you don't do anything, I will. I cannot bear to think of that good little man going to his death, even if he is a Chinese. He's a Christian like you and me, and he's good. You know a good man when you see one. Perhaps they're going to murder him because he's a Christian."

So saying, she wrote a note, put on her coat, and went out into the foggy night. It was October 17. Well after midnight the doorbell of Dr Cantlie's house rang. Dr Cantlie rose from his bed, turned on the light, and went downstairs. He opened the door. Nobody was there. But on the mat was a white slip of paper. The good doctor read it by the flickering light of his oil hand lamp. It read:

"There is a friend of yours who has been imprisoned in the Chinese Legation here since last Sunday. They intend to send him back to China, where it is certain they will hang him. It is very sad for the poor man who is a good Christian, and unless something is done at once, he will be gone and no one will know it. I dare not sign my name, but this is the truth, so believe what I say. Whatever you do must be done at once, or it will be too late. His name is, I believe, Sun Yat Sen."

So that was where Sun Yat Sen had been all this time! Dr Cantlie decided he must act immediately. He called Scotland Yard. The police told him such matters were entirely out of their hands. A legation was foreign soil. Early next morning, Dr Cantlie stood at the door of the Foreign Office in Whitehall. Finally he saw the great Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Lord Salisbury wanted to help, but he was powerless. According to international law, the British government had no jurisdiction within the grounds of the Chinese Legation. If an attempt were made to interfere, a grave international incident might occur.

Dr Cantlie was undaunted. He went to the powerful newspaper, the *London Times*, which immediately published a full account of the kidnapping of Sun Yat Sen by the Chinese officials. The *Times* ran the story for many days. From the first day, reporters from every London newspaper jammed the door of the Chinese Legation, clamouring for a statement on the kidnapping. Seeing the crowd outside, the Manchu officials were terrified. Their plot had been laid bare to the world. The power of the British press is enormous, and British reporters are uncommonly persistent. Hour after hour, day after day, watch was kept on the legation.

The tension in the legation grew when it was discovered that Scotland Yard had thrown a cordon round the grounds to "protect" foreign property, the British way of showing a polite interest in a proceeding regarded as highly irregular. Those stalwart policemen caused the officials great consternation. They had planned to remove the little doctor by a back door, but between the building and their destination lay British soil and the rights guaranteed by Magna Charta, which Sun Yat Sen admired so much. Repeatedly the reporters knocked at the door, and constantly the tension grew.

Finally, on the evening of October 23 the door opened, and from the murky interior of the house walked a smiling, wan little man in a Homburg hat. Sun Yat Sen had been released by the furious Manchu kidnappers. The British sense of fair play had triumphed. The press had thrown its powerful searchlight on the evil old house in Portland Place, and the next morning the ship on which the death passage had been reserved sailed for China without the intended victim.

From the day of his dramatic escape, Sun Yat Sen became known throughout the English speaking world. Practically every newspaper in the world, printed in English, published the account and voiced objection to the mediaeval methods and

practices of the Manchu government Sun Yat Sen was acclaimed a hero. He came to be known as the apostle of freedom for China's millions, and consequently it was felt that he was entitled to receive all possible assistance in pursuing his aims

Sun Yat-Sen did not forget the people who helped him to escape. He wrote to the *Times*, expressing his gratitude to all who had assisted in his rescue, and he liberally rewarded the English servant and his wife without whom he would certainly have met death

In London he continued to spread his gospel of freedom. He made occasional trips to the Continent. He visited social and political institutions wherever he went. He read books on the social and economic structure and political development of England and Continental Europe, and he continued to discuss his plans for modernizing China. After two years of study and discussion, he formulated his "Three Principles of the People," which he worked out to suit China's particular needs

In the stirring and dangerous revolutionary years that followed, he wrote and lectured on his "Three Principles of the People" all over the world. These are the principles:

First, Nationalism, second, the People's Rights, third, the People's Mode of Life. The first two principles he discussed at great length, the last, the people's mode of life, he never completed. His idea of nationalism is that there should be equality among all peoples and races, and that all peoples and races should respect one another and live in peace and harmony. His conception of the people's rights was that the people should have the rights of election, recall, initiative and referendum. Under the heading of the people's mode of life, Dr. Sun held that the people were entitled to good clothing, good food, comfortable housing and travelling.

His ideas formed a definite programme for the revolutionists. Dr. Sun went from Europe to Japan. There he gathered earnest

men and women, and sent them back to China for another uprising. He felt the time was opportune while the Boxers were making trouble. Again the attempt was a failure, but the seeds had taken root. Uprisings followed in different parts of the country at various times. But they all failed, and yet each of them succeeded in that it helped to spread the news of the movement. Every day more and more men and women joined the crusade.

In Japan Dr. Sun founded *Tung-meng Hui*, the Chinese Society of Covenanters, with representatives from all parts of China, each member sworn to overthrow the Manchu régime and transform China into a republic. This society later became *Kuomintang*, or Nationalist Party. The moment came on October 10, 1911, when an unprecedented but premature outbreak took place in Wuchang. Thirteen of the eighteen provinces in China declared their independence of the Manchu régime. The Manchu Emperor abdicated. The bugles sounded. The people cheered. The Republic of China was born.

In the United States, on the morning of October 12, in a dingy hotel room in Denver, Colorado, Sun-Yat Sen read in the local newspaper that the minor revolution in Wt-haog had been successful. He had not expected this to happen so soon. But it was true! The news of the success shone as clear as the bright autumn day itself. At last his aim had been accomplished. There were tears in his eyes. The miracle had happened. His crusade had succeeded. He went down on his knees and thanked God, and prepared to return home. Little did he know that this was only the beginning of more trials and troubles.

Sun Yat-Sen was quick to act. He was now a tired middle-aged man, in failing health, but the news gave him renewed strength. Immediately he issued a statement to the press, addressed to the people of the United States, in which he declared

that the principles and aims of the new Republic would resemble those of the United States. The provinces would have certain powers under the central government.

The American public liked his statement. The press demanded a personal interview. But Sun Yat-Sen felt it was no time for personal glory. There were many things to be done. So he disguised himself and travelled quietly to New York where he took a room in a hotel near Madison Square. Near the hotel lived a Chinese friend, at whose home Sun Yat-Sen ate his meals and where he had his mail addressed. Here came a cablegram from China announcing the success of the outbreak and requesting Sun Yat-Sen to return to China at once.

Still incognito he sailed from New York for London. There he visited his friend, Dr. Cantlie, and gathered more loans and promises of help from sympathizers with his cause. In November a cablegram announced that he had been elected the first President of the Chinese Republic. Sun Yat-Sen hurried home. On January 1, 1912, the inauguration took place at Nanking.

Then new troubles began. Sun Yat-Sen was a good revolutionist, but he was not a good executive. There were still parts of China that had not come under the banner of the new Republic. His immediate task was to unite them so that the nation could progress on the road of reform and reconstruction. The strongest of all the opposing factions was a warlord named Yuan Shih Kai. He had a large army in Peking and had collected the remaining Manchu forces under his flag. Sun Yat-Sen dispatched emissaries to Peking to invite Yuan's cooperation. Yuan Shih Kai's terms were that if Sun Yat-Sen wanted him to join the new Republic, he must relinquish the Presidency to Yuan. Sun Yat-Sen did not hesitate. Resignation would entail a sacrifice not only for himself but for the nation, but Sun Yat-Sen accepted the terms. He knew that a country split into different

factions could not long endure. On February 12, 1912, Yuan Shih kai forced the Manchu Emperor formally to abdicate his throne. The next day Sun Yat Sen handed in his resignation as President, and Yuan Shih kai was elected, not by the will of the majority, but for political reasons. Sun Yat Sen had been President for exactly forty five days. In allowing Yuan to become President, against the wishes of his advisers, he ran a grave risk for China's sake.

Yuan was a traitor to the Republic. He wanted to be crowned Emperor and restore the monarchy and feudalism. To accomplish this, his assassins made several attempts to murder Sun Yat Sen. Each time Dr Sun escaped, but he was again an exile. A Chinese gunboat took him to Japan. From Nagasaki he wrote a manifesto branding Yuan as a traitor to his country, saying that just as he had risen to overthrow the Manchus, so he would rise against Yuan.

The next two years saw a fierce and bloody struggle between Yuan's reactionary forces and Sun Yat Sen's newly organized *Kuomintang*. The *Kuomintang* had more followers, but Yuan had enormous financial and military resources. Yuan proclaimed himself Emperor. Triumph was hollow, his crown a strain. He died, driven insane because of Sun Yat Sen's untiring opposition and because he could not inflict his own will on the people.

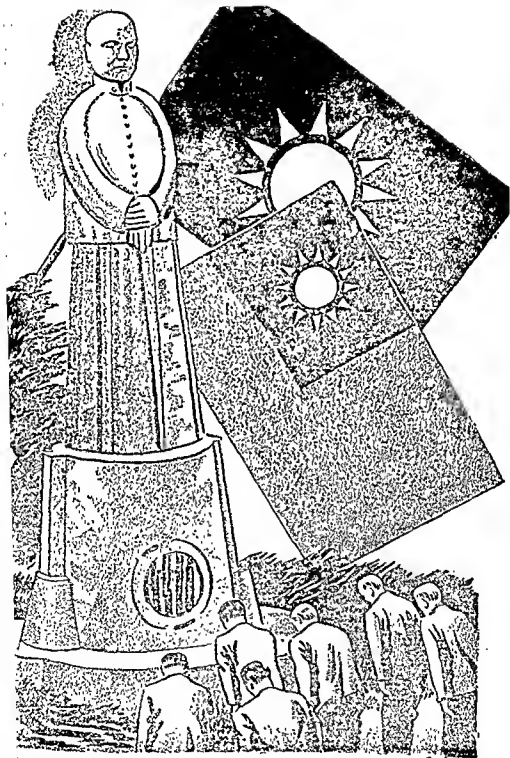
Sun Yat Sen returned to China in 1913 to live at Shanghai. Contributions to help him to build a new China poured in from all the corners of the earth, from Chinese and foreign sympathizers alike. Another man, Li Yuen Hung, sworn to loyal republicanism, had succeeded to the Presidency, but Sun Yat Sen was still the actual leader of the Progressives.

In Shanghai, now sick and weary, he led a comparatively quiet life, devoting most of his time to studying and writing. His many days and months of meditation led him to discern his

own faults. He saw how he had failed to handle the new Republic according to plan when the Manchu dynasty fell. His error, he concluded, lay in the fact that for centuries the Chinese had believed in the proverb, "To know is easy, to act is difficult." From his own bitter experience, the proverb should be the reverse. "To know is difficult, to act is easy." With scholarly charm he gave examples to prove his statement. Eating, he said, is easy. Yet how many people can say that they know all the scientific facts concerning the physiology of feeding and digestion and the chemistry of nutrition and dietetics? Lack of this knowledge, however, never prevents one from the simple and necessary act of eating. Again, he said, it is easy to spend money but how difficult it is even for the financial and monetary experts to grasp the subtleties and mysteries of the branch of science called Economics. The traditional belief, "To know is easy, to act is difficult," he argued, is therefore psychological defeatism. All actions would become impossible if people remained scared by the words "to act is difficult."

From this awakening of himself, Sun Yat Sen wrote a book called *The Philosophy of Sun Yat Sen*, in which he told the people to follow leadership and respect those who *know*. But they were never to let their worship of knowledge keep them from the courage to *act*.

In the early part of the year 1915, while Sun Yat-Sen was working and writing, he had as his secretary a beautiful, young, American educated girl, Soong Chung Ling. She was an ardent sympathizer with the revolution and a great admirer of the tired and lonely little revolutionary, Sun Yat Sen. Because of twenty years of wandering and exile, he had been kept away from the wife chosen for him so long ago by his parents. He found pleasant companionship in this young, attractive, modern and well educated woman with whom he had daily association, whose





intelligence was so useful, whose presence so bright. He wanted to divorce his wife to marry Soong Chung Ling, but the action was strongly objected to by his friends and followers, as well as by Miss Soong's own parents. But Sun Yat-Sen again took his troubles to God and prayed for guidance. He went to Japan and asked his wife whether she would consent to a divorce. She replied that she would be happy and honored to serve him, and so Dr. Sun and Soong Chung Ling were married on October 25, 1915.

Mme. Sun proved to be a steadfast companion. She was persistent in her pursuit of the great principles of freedom and equality she found in the works and character of her husband.

But China was far from unified. The different political and military factions were still warring, and the nation was divided into many sections. Sun Yat-Sen continued to fight them with force or persuasion in order to bring about his dream of national unity. He took an active part in every revolutionary campaign against the militaristic war lords. He was fearless and untiring.

He became the Director of the Canton government, and later President of South China. On all sides he found jealousy and opposition, but he kept on fighting and though discouraged he never gave up. He soon found that his efforts to unite the country by peace negotiations were futile. The only way was to send a military expedition to subdue the North. He sought help from General Chen Chuoog Ming, whom he had appointed commander of the southern forces. Again there was trouble. Sun wanted him to advance, Chen raised objections. His troops were not ready, he said. The advance would be suicide. The two quarreled. The powerful Chen marched his troops to Canton and seized the city.

On June 6, 1921, at two o'clock in the morning, Sun Yat-Sen went into his wife's room and woke her to say she must

leave the house at once. Chen's troops were looting the city. Mme. Sun would not go. She felt she would be quite safe in the house. Sun pleaded and argued. One of his aides told him to leave himself, so, after posting a guard of fifty men in the palace yard, he took refuge on a British gunboat. For fifty six days, Sun and his aides remained on that gunboat in the China Sea waiting for news of his wife. Finally a message was brought by a bright young soldier named Chiang Kai Shek. Mme. Sun was safe and on her way to join her husband on the British gunboat, which finally landed them both in Shanghai.

While Sun Yat Sen and his wife were there, China began to have troubles with foreign powers. To Japan and Russia, Sun Yat Sen looked for advice and assistance while continuing negotiations and conferences between the North and South with a view to unity. Only if peace prevailed could he reconstruct his country. He knew that unless the Republic was unified, China would not be able to reap the benefits of the overthrow of the Manchu regime. Day by day, however, his health grew worse. During one of the conferences at which he was planning the betterment of his people, he collapsed. He was rushed to the Peking Union Medical College of the Rockefeller Foundation. The doctors operated. They found he was suffering from an incurable disease. They told him so. The little man asked how long it would be before the incision healed. "I am busy," he said with a smile. "I have work to do."

Later he said: "I am a coolie and the son of a coolie. I was born with the poor and I am still poor. My sympathies have always been with the struggling masses. He died on March 12, 1925. He had dictated his will addressed to his followers. It is read every year on the anniversary of his death and once a week at Monday morning memorial services in the schools and colleges of China. A translation follows.

**"THE LAST WILL OF DR. SUN YAT-SEN  
TO HIS FOLLOWERS:**

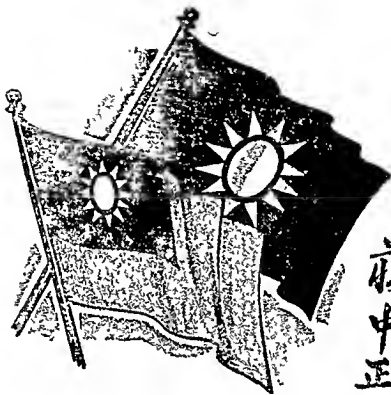
"For forty years I have devoted myself to the cause of the people's revolution with but one end in view, the elevation of China to a position of freedom and equality among the nations. My experiences during these forty years have firmly convinced me that to attain this goal we must bring about a thorough awakening of our own people and ally ourselves in a common struggle with those peoples of the world that treat us on a basis of equality.

"The work of the revolution is not yet done. Let all our comrades follow my 'Plans for National Reconstruction', 'Fundamentals of National Reconstruction', 'Three Principles of the People' and the 'Manifesto' issued by the First National Convention of our party, and strive earnestly for their consummation. Above all, our recent declarations in favour of the convocation of a national convention and the abolition of unequal treaties should be carried into effect with the least possible delay. This is my heartfelt charge to you.

"SUN WEN.

"March 11, 1925."

Sun Yat-Sen's work lives on. The brightness of his name shines like the morning star of hope. The little doctor had the heart of a lion, the courage of a tiger and the simple, trusting soul of a saint.



CHAPTER X  
THE GENERALISSIMO  
*CHIANG KAI-SHEK*

THESE were dark days in China. Tyranny and oppression ruled the land, superstition and cruelty stalked the countryside like grim skeletons. In Peking the tottering remnants of the Manchu dynasty lived in a state of unbelievable luxury, fulfilling the couplet of the poet of the Tang dynasty who wrote. "In front of the Red Door, the people are dying of starvation. On the other side, the stench of wasted meat rises to heaven." The people, however, were awakening. Even the stern, autocratic rule of the Manchus could not stifle the individual love of

democracy that tradition had instilled into the hearts of the Chinese and in millions of hearts there still lingered the hope that the day would come when the foreign empire would crash into its own putrid dust, and that China would once again be ruled by a Chinese

It was the year 1886 The Dowager Empress was acting as Regent for the fifteen year old Kwang Hsu, and the people were groaning under the weight of taxation Anger at the succession of treaties that were giving away their fatherland to the foreigner stirred in the hearts of young and old but nowhere were there visible signs that the day of liberation was at hand

The people of China were divided roughly into two classes the very rich and the very poor There were few of the former and millions of the latter When famine and flood struck with the seasons millions died, when the armies of the provincial governors fell on a locality to collect taxes the area was left as bare as a field of corn after the visit of a swarm of locusts Life was cheap and heads rolled in the dust at the whim of the overlords girl children were left to starve because they were considered not worth feeding Only a few fortunate people managed to live in comfort and those with kind hearts were forced to keep their eyes adroitly closed to avoid noticing the hardships of their neighbours Education was at a low ebb and only the few could acquire it The nation was honeycombed with a countless swarm of civil servants who sat for the imperial examinations and either lived on their meagre salaries in scholarly worlds of their own or preyed on the people with the authority vested in them by the Peking regime

But man's extremity is often God's opportunity Small and seemingly unimportant events fit into the mechanism of the clock of destiny and bring the hammer of endeavour to strike on the gong of liberation Such an event happened in a little village called Chi kao in Chekuang the province of China which lies

south of Shanghai. One morning late in October in the ninth month of the Year of the Pig, a certain salt merchant named Chiang annonned to his neighbours that Heaven had blessed him with a son. The birth was celebrated in due fashion in the village, and was promptly forgotten as the baby grew to maturity along the paths of the average Chinese child of the time. Within a few years his father died, and young Chung-Cheng, as the boy was called, was brought up by his widowed mother. As we have seen, mothers have always exerted the strongest influence on their children in China, Chung-Cheng's mother was no exception. She ruled her son with a veritable rod of iron. Indeed, she found it necessary to do so, for the boy was unruly and opinionated, and it was thought by many that he would come to a bad and early end.

Some of the neighbours said this was because his mother spoiled him in a way that no other mother in the village did. The truth seems to be that Chiang's mother alternated between indulging the boy and being stern with him over certain aspects of his life, including his education. She was not well educated herself, but she was determined that her son should have the best that she could afford. She became, in fact, a stern father and an indulgent mother at the same time, and if she was aware of his faults, she was also alive to his virtues.

The boy was indeed a problem child. He sought his own company rather than that of the other boys in the village, and had the reputation of being sour and taciturn, but he could defend himself against all comers. He particularly disliked attending the village private school for which his mother had so carefully hoarded money to pay the fees. Like many other boys who were later to make their mark in history, he did not shine as a scholar and was unpopular with his teachers, but there were times when he showed astonishing flashes of knowledge which showed that he was obtaining it from some other source than

*Lao Hsi*, the Old Teacher, a sleepy old scholar who imparted knowledge on the only prescribed lines he knew. There is no doubt that the school bored the youngster, and that his lack of interest irritated the teacher and was duly reported to his mother.

Instead of deciding as many parents would have done, that if he did not want to study he might as well leave school and start at any kind of work that presented itself in order to contribute a few pennies to the household, the good woman had other ideas. If the boy did not suit the school, it was possible that the school did not suit the boy. There was a good, expensive school at near by Fenghua. If she could raise the money to pay the fees, she could send the boy there and give him a real opportunity to obtain an education. Finding the money, however, was the great obstacle. No matter how much she scraped and saved on the housekeeping, despite what she sold, she could not afford more than a semester's fee. It was then that she called on a relative of her husband's for help. This person had a general store in Fenghua. He consented to take the boy provided he worked for his upkeep after school hours, and thus young Chuang did what millions of American boys and girls have done. He "worked his way through college," or at any rate began to do so. At school he surprised his teachers and his family by showing astonishing brilliance. He stood at the head of his class during his first semester, but he was still taciturn, unruly and resentful of discipline.

Occasionally he would abscond himself to take long walks in the country, where he loved to watch the birds and spend long hours in the sunshine reclining on the river bank. Sometimes he would take with him some of the classics his fond mother had sent him. The new home pleased him less than the one he had left. He missed his mother's indulgence. His relatives disliked him heartily, and often he was beaten and locked up without food because he took no interest in his work. He

always did things alone. Other boys played tip-cat and other games in the street. Young Chung Cheng would have none of this, and so he was generally considered morose and unfriendly. He hated to work in his relative's store, refusing to exchange greetings and gossip with the customers. The day came when the little room on the ground floor where he slept was empty. The boy had gone.

The family rubbed their hands and said, "Good riddance!" They had done their best. The next news that his mother received from her son, who obeyed the Confucian analect about never travelling without advising one's parents of one's whereabouts, was from a military camp in the north of China. Her son had joined the army. That, for the family, was the end of everything. The average Chinese of the time regarded the army as a collection of criminals and cut throats entirely without honour. They had good reason to fear soldiers, who had been known to rob and plunder to supplement their rations and augment their scanty, irregular pay.

Chiang's entering into the military service seemed to have happened at a most auspicious time. The armies of China had been battered by invading foreign troops, but China's leaders still hoped to regain the frontiers and ports they had lost. It was decided that the only way to combat the "foreign devils" was to raise an army and train it on modern lines. A grant of money was obtained from the Dowager Empress, whose profligacy had brought the nation to disaster, and a College of Military Science was opened for the training of officers.

In some respects, the college was revolutionary. For one thing, instead of admitting only the sons of wealthy parents, it was thrown open to any soldier in the service who could qualify by examination. There was sound reasoning in this. The wealthy Chinese shrank from the idea of their sons becoming soldiers,



Even being an officer was degrading, when the acquisition of literary knowledge and business skill offered such rich prizes.

To the astonishment of the family and the pride of his doting mother, Chiang Chung Cheng carried off the highest place in a military examination and went to the Military Academy at Pao Ting Fu. This was in 1906. He found the college to his liking. He was quick to learn, and proved to be a good soldier. But he soon felt that the college had nothing more to offer him. He had read every book, mastered the limited treatise on military tactics, and surpassed the other students. Was it to be the end? There must be some further progress he could make in the military art. The question was how to find it. For six months he stayed at the college teaching others, ruling his associates with an iron discipline, and filling in his spare time by reading the political history of China. The knowledge he gained kindled the flame of his patriotism. The conviction grew on him that China could be saved, that one day a unified China under a Chinese ruler would come into being.

One morning a tall young man in soldier's uniform knocked at the door of the little gray stone house with the green roof in the village where Chiang was born. Mrs. Chiang's boy had grown into a tall, stalwart young man, taller than the average. He was still taciturn and unsmiling, but he carried himself with pride and soldierly bearing. He greeted his mother with filial ceremony and announced that he had learned all that there was to know about military science. His mother listened carefully to what he had to say. Then she gave her opinion. "You must continue your studies, my son. China needs men like you."

Imagine the effect of that remark on the young man shortly to reach his twenty-first birthday. Although he loved his mother, he could never have had the slightest idea that her mind was sufficiently developed to appreciate his ambition. "My son," she said, "I want you to be the greatest soldier in all China."

naturally gravitated towards one another. Just as an American boy in Chungking to day will visit the American Red Cross to hear his own language spoken and enjoy the luxury of his own native food, so the lonely young soldier in foreign Tokyo found his way to a newly organized Chinese club known as *Tung Meng Hui*, or Common Alliance Association. Its members were for the most part Chinese business men, though there were also a few Chinese students whose parents had been able to send them abroad for their education. Chuang did not find the club too interesting at first. The majority of the students were wealthy, he was poor. They chattered incessantly, he said little. There were, however, Chinese books, Chinese food and an atmosphere that reminded him of home. Occasionally visiting Chinese addressed the club, telling the members what was happening at home. One of them was Dr. Sun Yat Sen, the founder of the Chinese Republic.

Dr. Sun saw the need of modernizing China, and he found a good listener in young Chuang. The amiable little surgeon could never have guessed that those few words of his uttered in distant Tokyo were to light a fire that would eventually purge, with the white hot fire of patriotism, the dark oppression stifling the liberties of the people of his native land. Very likely he did not even notice the solemn faced young soldier student sitting far back in the audience, listening eagerly to every word.

Dr. Sun Yat Sen went on his way to Europe, a revolutionary, with a price on his head. Chuang Chung Cheng marched back to his student quarters that evening, his heart aglow, his mind determined. He had a mission in life. He had an ambition that he had never had before. Previously he had played at life, studying military science because he liked it, being brilliant because it was easy, scorning the stupid, tolerating few. Now he saw his destiny. Across the sea was his native land in chains, but it would not always be so. He could and would do his share.

For the first time the youth smiled, but it was a grim smile, for a reason that was not apparent to those around him. They probably thought he had found a girl with whom he was in love, or that he had received some extra money from home. A year later, Chiang was back in China, a graduate military expert. He wasted no time. In Shanghai he found a war lord willing to lure him as a general. Although the war lord was ostensibly a supporter of the Manchu regime, he was in reality looking out for himself, coming as near to being a bandit as the others. To the young general, he handed the command of a brigade of rough, uneducated soldiers. Many of them were deserters from the imperial army. They were poorly clothed, poorly armed and underpaid.

Chiang went to work with a will that must have surprised his employer. He decided to train his troops on the lines of the Japanese army. From the beginning, he made their lives miserable, as only a strict disciplinarian can. He introduced new drills, physical training, penalties and exercises. He worked them unmercifully. He demanded that the men should be paid, that modern arms should be bought, and that a school for officers should be opened. He also saw to it that the men were well fed, and he ate with them to show his willingness to share their life.

Some deserted, even officers left him. He was glad to see them go. He sought only men, men whom he could make tough and hard and cunning, men to fight as he wanted them to. He was building a model army as an experiment. Within a short time, he had under his command the best trained troops in the whole of China, a modern army disciplined to a high degree, able to march in step and act as one man. He had loyal, disciplined officers, a corps of soldiers, not bandits. The change had been brought about almost unnoticed by the outside world. When Chiang called his employer to inspect his troops, the old

man was astonished and flattered. He had kept his army for one good reason only — to *enforce his own will*. So pleased was he with the result that he gave the young commander money and authority to double the strength of his force.

But the dice were loaded against Chiang. When Dr Sun's first brief period as president came to an end and his successor announced his intention of proclaiming himself Emperor, rioting broke out. Chiang's war lord was assassinated, his army disbanded. He found himself almost penniless and without work. His only way of earning a living was to work in a Shanghai office. He did, and by rigid economy he was even able to save a little money. He began to gamble on the stock exchange and lost money. A friend introduced him to Dr Sun Yat Sen, who liked him and gave him a position on his staff.

In June, 1922, Chiang rendered his president a great service. He happened to hear of a plot against the president's life. He warned Dr Sun. The scholarly, amiable surgeon ignored the warning because he knew the man who was alleged to be planning it. Late one evening when Dr Sun was in Canton, the telephone rang again. It was Chiang Kai Shek. He gave the President the hour of the intended assault. Dr Sun decided to flee. His wife begged him to go without waiting for her, and thus saved his life. Dr Sun escaped to sea as an unruly mob of soldiers wrecked his home. From that moment it was evident that Chiang Kai Shek would become a dominant figure in the politics of New China. Dr Sun had great faith in his new aide, but he recognized his limitations and determined to give him as much of an opportunity as possible to acquire knowledge that would be useful both to him and to China. In 1923, while Europe was struggling to overcome the effects of the First World War and the young State of Soviet Russia was emerging from the chaos of revolution, he sent Chiang to Moscow to study military

affairs and to act as a goodwill ambassador to China's troubled but powerful neighbour

The visit to Russia had a lasting effect on Chiang and on China. It did not, as outside critics assume, lure Chiang into communism, nor did it help to spread Russian influence in China beyond military assistance. Chiang was a member of Dr Sun Yat-Sen's *Kuomintang* and, as such, was loyal to the plan of life formulated by Dr Sun. He recognized, however, that Russia could be a very valuable ally to China in her hour of need.

Chiang wanted a strong China, so he obtained as much help as possible from the nearest neighbour, Russia. He returned to China accompanied by Michael Borodin, a Russian soldier and politician who had taken a great liking to Chiang although neither could speak the other's language. Borodin helped Chiang to organize the Whampoo Military Academy and to train a sizable army, which subdued the warring factions and maintained law and order in a large section of the country.

Chiang was pleased with what he had learned from Borodin, but he wanted more military aid. The *Kuomintang* party that he served was opposed to foreign intervention. By this time Chiang had learned that to get what you want in life calls for courage, perseverance and action. He stormed at the opposition to him and finally won his point. By the end of the year, he had as his chief of staff General Galen of the Soviet army. The move was a wise one, for it enabled him to step up the training of the central army. Within a year of Dr Sun Yat-Sen's death, the Nationalist government had been formed following the subjection of the Kwangtung and Kwangsi Provinces which had been under the domination of the war-lord Chen Chung Ming, a bold and powerful militarist who aimed to set himself up as the head of the nation.

Then with a government firmly established, General Chiang went to war, embarking on one of the most remarkable

campaigns in military history. At lightning speed he brought his crack troops into action, advanced through Hunan to the Yangtze River, and established a regime at Wuchang. On his return he expelled the extremists from the National Party in 1927. After this ruthless and bitter campaign that gave rise to much criticism and fierce opposition, he succeeded in subduing the subversive elements. As a result, Michael Borodin was called home by the Soviet government.

The same year Chiang retired and went to Japan to study military affairs. He returned to China to marry May Ling Soong and again directed the *Kuomintang* with the firm and unyielding desire to unite China before Japan struck. He succeeded, and after the occupation of Peking he became President of the Nationalist government, a position he held from 1928 to 1931 when he resigned to devote himself to military affairs.

Training an army was of vital importance. To the German Reich he turned for help, and General Von Falkenhurst was installed as chief of staff in charge of military training. To his efforts, and to what he had learned in Japan, Chiang owed much, but never for a moment did he incline towards Nazism, a fact that enraged Hitler to the extent that Von Falkenhurst was recalled to serve the Nazi party. Behind him, in China, he left the nucleus of a well trained army, from which General Chiang was able to develop a number of crack divisions which, fighting almost with their bare hands, staved off the Japanese invasion during the long, dreary years that followed.

When Japan first landed her troops in China in 1937, there was a strong party in the *Kuomintang* in favour of appeasement. Among them was handsome Wang Chung Wei who now heads the Japanese puppet government in Nanking. Chiang decided to fight, trading space for time. He did this successfully and won the first stage of the war, but at what seems a shocking

and dreadful cost to China with millions upon millions of civilians dead, and millions homeless, with severe losses in men, material and territory. To day, however, as President of China, with powerful allies at his side, he stands at the head of a nation poised for ultimate victory, with a powerful, well trained army still waiting for modern weapons. He has an air force that flies side by side with the Americans, he has conferred with the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain. On General Sulwell, his beloved American friend, he relies as he would on one of his own nation. On the 450,000,000 Chinese he has laid the burden of a definite task in the war—to resist the enemy—and he shoulders the major burden of that task himself. His motto, whether dealing with soldiers or civilians, is "What is good enough for me is good enough for you," and vice versa.

To day, at the age of fifty eight he is the most powerful man in China, the virtual ruler of his people. He lives with extreme simplicity, getting up with the sun, washing and shaving in cold water, going through a rigid series of calisthenics every morning. His hobby is gardening, his passion reading, his chief pleasure listening to music over the radio. He has no fear of the enemy, of shell or bomb, and has never been known to doubt for an instant that China will survive the present war. He is a prolific writer, his works are best sellers in China, and he preaches the gospel of personal virtue to his people as a means of achieving ultimate victory.

He is gentle in manner, a tiger when roused, is revered by millions, hated by a few, and feared by all.

The generalissimo is an enigma even to those in daily contact with him. In the presence of his soldiers, he is a stiff, taut and fiery military man. In his home, which is always full of freshly cut flowers, he is a gentle gray haired scholar who always

works with a Bible at his side. He wears a simple uniform without decorations. He likes to walk in his garden in the evening, working out in his mind the many problems that lie ahead of him, civil as well as military. Although he seems leisurely and deliberate, he finds time to accomplish an enormous amount of work. He likes to do everything himself, even to the handling of such details as increased pensions for soldiers' widows, or a wedding present for one of his cadets. He is the head of China's Army, Air Force and Navy, controls the civil government, and works tirelessly to keep up national morale and spread the doctrine of the Golden Rule throughout the nation.

The man who battled sloth, apathy and treason in his early days is a stern disciplinarian almost to the point of tyranny. For years he forbade the cadets at his military academy to smoke, drink or visit a cinema house. Recently he relaxed the order. He still talks very little, expressing himself in a few terse words. He makes quick decisions and expects others to obey promptly.

His physical appearance has changed little since he was a young man, except that his hair is grayer and his jaw squarer. He weighs only about a hundred and fifty pounds though he is five feet ten and a half inches tall. He has the same penetrating eyes, the same gentle smile, when his mind is not occupied with governmental affairs.

His daily life is simple in the extreme. Early in the day he spends half an hour in prayer and meditation, pondering on the problems of the day and presenting them to God. He does the same thing half an hour before dinner every evening. He does a great deal of writing. He keeps a diary in which he records everything that happens, including his impressions of people and events. When time permits, he composes speeches, writes poetry and prepares radio talks with the help of his talented wife.



His speeches and writings are perhaps the best guide to the character of the man. He has been not only an accurate prophet through the years, but also a never-failing inspiration to his people. In American history, perhaps his nearest counterpart is the great Abraham Lincoln. Both will be remembered as rough, homely men who rose to fame by the very fact that they were sons of the people who loved and served the people.

Although outwardly stern of mien, he has a way of expressing himself in writing that endears him to the hearts of men. On October 10, 1938, he spoke thus over the radio: "My dear fellow countrymen: As you commemorate the twenty-seventh anniversary of the founding of our Republic, you will call to mind the events of the fifteen months since our war of resistance began, and you will feel so heartened at what we have already achieved. A year ago some of you were still wavering, but now the faith and determination of the whole nation are unmistakable and unshaken. . . . We are engaged in a life-and-death struggle. The purpose of this struggle is not merely to prevent conquest or destruction, but to win for our country a position of independence and equality in the family of nations. For this reason our responsibilities will increase and the struggle will become more intense, more difficult and more critical. We must be doubly watchful and not tolerate any kind of negligence. Every one of you must help and do his or her part actively and wholeheartedly. We must remember that the most difficult moment may be the greatest opportunity for success."

A few days later, after the evacuation of Hankow, his voice was again heard. This time he told the people that the turning point of the struggle had been passed and that from that moment on China would develop an all-front resistance. "We must endure greater hardships. . . . We must march courageously forward. As the proverb has it, 'One who sets out on a hundred-mile journey is only halfway when he has covered ninety.' We

must exert ourselves to the utmost. It is better to be a broken jade than a whole tile.'

Besides building up China's military strength, the general and his wife have steadily applied themselves to the task of strengthening the national morale and individual efficiency. *San Min Chu I*, The Three Principles of the People, has played a large part in the nation's resistance to the enemy. In February, 1939, the general wrote "I consider that our chief task at this period of the war is to invigorate and unify our own spirit so that we can lead the spiritual mobilization movement of the whole nation. This calls for a common standard of ethics, a common faith in the future of the country, and labour, struggle and sacrifice for this common standard and faith.

What is this common standard of ethics? Nothing but the abandonment of the small self in favour of the large self. What is this common faith? Nothing but *San Min Chu I* the ultimate goal which is China's highest political ideal — universal brotherhood. The Book of Rules says 'When the great way is followed, all under Heaven work for the common good. The wise and capable are chosen for office. They speak the truth and cultivate harmony. Men do not limit their filial piety to their parents, nor their parental love to their own children. The able are provided for until death, the young given the opportunity to grow. Kindness is shown to the widowed, the orphaned, the childless, the afflicted. Every man has his work. Every woman has her home. People do not waste, neither do they hoard. They are not content to be idle, yet when they toil, it is not simply for their own advantage. Thus selfish schemers do not flourish and robbery and rebellion disappear.

"These are the objectives of our programme of national regeneration. In their attainment the nation will find realization and the people happiness. To-day we give our sweat and blood on the battlefield and at the same time we are marshalling all our



intellectual forces for reconstruction I am happy to have the opportunity to work for you At the same time, I am conscious of my own limitations I fear I may not be able to fulfil your expectations of me If you should find my judgment unsound if you find me insincere of word and deed, impractical or incompetent I hope you will unhesitatingly advise and correct me so that I may not fail in my duty

Are these the words of a dictator? Rather they are the utterances of a spiritually minded senior partner who loves his people and who is conscious of the honour of leading them through troubled times

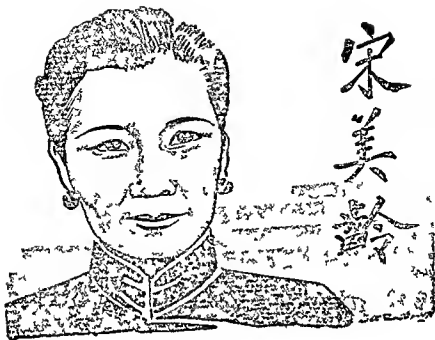
Chiang can use fighting words, too In January 1940 he entitled his message to the armed forces, 'We Shall Not Be Slaves' In the talk he denounced Wang Ching Wei as a traitor adding 'Let the Japanese create ten puppet regimes if they wish and give them what names they like There was thunder in his voice 'To us they will be simply slave governments under the Japanese, and useless They cannot affect in the slightest degree our real government As soon as a man makes up his mind to betray his country, there is no limit to the injuries he is willing to inflict on his fellow countrymen for generations to come Let us press on my dear comrades until we recover all our lost territory and wipe out our national disgrace by completing the task for which our brave soldiers are laying down their lives and then we shall build the China of our hopes and dreams

On December 9 1941, the day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour General Chiang was the first head of an Allied government to declare war on Japan 'To our now common battle, we offer all we are, and all we have to stand with you until the Pacific and the world are free from the curse of brute force and endless perfidy his telegram to President Roosevelt read

Such is the man who came from nothing and fought his way through difficulties to become the equal of the great leaders of modern times schooled in politics and diplomacy. A simple, plain spoken soldier, he lives by the rule of conduct he expects others to follow. The very leanness of his body in his advancing years is the outward and visible sign of the abstemious life he leads. He eschews smoking, drinking and the overloaded table. His spiritual stature is great, his capacity for hard work enormous. He admires President Roosevelt and America. He has faith in his own people. In the midst of war and its trials, his heart is alive to the smaller things of life.

Who should know this man of mystery better than his charming wife, whose counsels have replaced those of his mother? Madame Chiang relates an incident that occurred shortly after their marriage, when she went with her soldier husband on an expedition against the opposition elements in the Kiangsi area. A cowshed served as their headquarters. Madame Chiang had scrubbed the humble dwelling and the two sat down to celebrate the Chinese New Year's Day. The general looked around the room and then excused himself. He came back later carrying some branches of the white plum blossoms he had picked in the nearby mountains.

In ancient Chinese literature the five petals of the winter plum represent the five blessings of joy, good luck, longevity, prosperity and peace. Peace to us was the most desired of all, writes Madame Chiang. That night when the candles were lighted, my husband presented the blossoms to me in a basket — his New Year's gift in an area where nothing could be bought. That night massed in the basket by candlelight they took on an indescribable beauty. Their shadows on the wall made clean, bold outlines like those of a picture by the great Ming artist Pahi Dnli Jen. And she adds: Perhaps you can see why I am willing to share the rigours of life at the front with my husband for he has the courage of a soldier and the sensitive soul of a poet.



## CHAPTER VI

### DAUGHTER OF DESTINY

#### *CHIANG SOONG MAY LING*

SHE is small and bright of face, sweet of smile and quick in her movements. So fragile she seems to the Western world that when she last came on her visit to the United States to tell our Congress of China's needs, many who met her wondered how it was that so frail a woman could endure the hardships of war and the fierce relentless routine that May Ling Soong Chian, or Chiang Soong May Ling as she is known in her own country has imposed on herself.

Those who thought that war can be forgiven because they do not know the average Chinese woman of whom Madame

Chiang is typical — with her tireless energy in the battle against a cruel enemy, in order that China may survive and shine among the nations of the world. Frail of body she may be, but her spirit and mentality never sag. While she was in this country, she wore out her secretaries, slept but a few hours a day, and was often at her desk as early as four in the morning. Accustomed as she was to American ways, she could not understand how others could stop work at six and start again at nine the next morning, when their nation was at war. For her there was no rest, no leisure, and because she expected others to do as she did, those in close association with her described her as "difficult."

Madame Chiang came to America first for a rest, then to present her country's case, but while she was a patient in a New York hospital she did an astonishing amount of work, writing speeches and articles, planning her campaign and seeing important people; and when she emerged into public life, she dazzled Americans with her beauty, wit and charm. Her eloquence astounded the learned, and charmed the man and woman in the street; her force and drive would put the ordinary average business executive to shame or result in his having a nervous breakdown. And all the time, by radio and cable, she kept her finger on China's pulse at home.

Such a woman is May-Ling Soong Chiang, or Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, China's first lady and good-will ambassador to the world.

How China came by such a gifted daughter is one of the romances of personal history and of destiny. It began when a God-fearing sea captain named Jones adopted a little Chinese boy who had stowed away on his coastal steamer plying between Boston and North Carolina. The captain provided the boy with an education. As Charlie Jones Soong, the boy went back to

China a devout Christian, to found a substantial business and spread the Word of God to millions of Chinese, by preaching and printing the Bible in the Chinese language. In due course, Charlie Soong married a Christian wife, and the couple had three daughters, Ai Ling, Ching Ling and May Ling, and three sons, T V Soong, T L Soong and T A Soong, all of whom were destined to play dominant parts in China's history.

Charles Soong a fervent and persistent admirer of things American, sent his daughters, together with his sons to America to be educated. Such a procedure must have shocked the neighbours, because even in those days, at the turn of the century, it was considered a waste of money to educate a daughter. The usual procedure was to allot each daughter a certain sum of money as a dowry and marry her off to the first suitable young man. The reason for this was that, once a girl was married, she was regarded as belonging to her husband's family, and thus any money invested in her education was considered a loss. Charles Soong would have none of this. To America went all his daughters and so, in 1909, May Ling arrived in America to begin her studies at Wesleyan College in Georgia. She could already read and write English and had read more of the classics than the average American child of her age. Her later ability to write English with a sparkling literary style is doubtless traceable to this early taste for reading.

Her arrival at the college and her eager thirst to do things must have surprised her fellow students, many of whom were inclined to cold shoulder the little 'heathen' as the Chinese were known in those days. This very coldness must have inspired May Ling to assert herself. She, her two sisters and another Chinese girl banded themselves together into a society, produced a newspaper edited by May Ling, and generally held their own against the other students. When they were excluded from the



college sororities, they formed their own, and presented a solid front against youthful persecution

May Ling was the liveliest of the three Soong girls. Her temper was as quick as her desire for knowledge was great. Intensely proud of her Chinese heritage, she was also lonely for her homeland, but would never show her tears to her teachers or to the family with whom she lived. Whenever a mood of depression came over her, she would go into her room, shut the door and sit in the dark, wearing her Chinese dress, which seemed to give her strength

She was outspoken even in her early years. On her way to the United States, she had been detained by the immigration officials at San Francisco. Later, when her uncle took her to the White House to visit President Theodore Roosevelt, the plump little girl with the impish face promptly asked him why a little Chinese girl should be "kept out of your country, if it is so free." There was scorn and pride in the child's face as she added "We don't treat visitors that way in China." The President apologized. A long time was to pass before the Chinese Exclusion Act would be amended. There were times when May Ling was mischievous and gay, gay enough to call down the reproof of her elders, but she never cried, and accepted her reproofs as part of her education. She argued with people of all ages for mental exercise and even when she quarrelled, there was a twinkle in her eye. She played tennis well, and loved to scamper in the woods and take long country walks. She was always a diplomat. When she and three other little girls wanted to form a society, they had everything but a room to meet in. They made Bishop Ainsworth, the college president, an honorary member, and May Ling suggested that his quarters be used as a meeting place for the society.

Study was the least difficult part of her life. She met every criticism with a flashing challenge. Charles Soong was a father

among fathers. Never at any time did he allow his daughters to forget they were Chinese, and he was at pains to keep them informed as to what was happening in China. Every week he sent them a long letter describing events around him, filling in the happenings with the political background that had given rise to each event. He himself was an enthusiastic supporter of Sun Yat Sen, and sent the girls the new national flag adopted by China after the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty.

Little May Ling treated the college campus to her own version of the revolution and the overthrow of tyranny. Wearing her best Chinese dress, with her hair set in the fashion of a grown up Chinese woman, she took the old flag with its dragon emblem and trampled it beneath her feet to the applause of her fellows. Then she displayed the Nationalist banner for all to see. Then she went to her room and wrote an article describing the revolution as the greatest event of the twentieth century, which was printed in the college newspaper.

It was a passionate literary piece, written with the throbbing blood of a young patriot, who perhaps even then realized that the destiny of China lay in the hands of its youth. Her stay in America had taught her that women could play a major part in a nation's development and that, above all, China's women would not only have to be set free, but would have to be taught how to use their freedom.

From Wesleyan she went to Wellesly, where she became a popular figure among her classmates.

At Wellesley, May Ling developed a passion for romance literature. She fought eloquently to defend China against any slight laid on it by unthinking or uninformed students. She never tired of telling her classmates that China had conferred more benefits on the civilized world than any other nation, but she was worried about herself and her split Occidental Oriental mind. "The only thing Chinese about me is my face," she wrote

to a friend, but she continued to argue and worry. As Professor Annie K. Tuell, with whom she boarded, said "She kept up an awful thinking about everything"

She constantly put questions to people. One person she would ask, "What is religion?" and expect a terse, concise answer. "What is philosophy?" was another favourite opening conversation piece. But all the time she was thinking out the answers herself, piecing together the knowledge from which she would select whatever was best suited to the needs of her nation. The letters she received from home sometimes made her restlessly impatient to graduate and return to play her part in the revolution.

As her graduation drew near, her father suggested that she should stay awhile in America to see the country and finish her education. She replied that she wanted to go back to China immediately, and sailed to join her father, who was in Tokyo, hiding in fear of his life while the Manchu elements were making a prolonged attempt to re-establish their dynasty.

It was a proud moment when the father met his daughter. May Ling (Beautiful Life) had gone to America a plump, laughing dumpling of a little girl. She had returned a striking, calm-eyed beauty of bewitching grace who outshone her sisters Ai Ling (Friendly Life) and Ching Ling (Happy Life). From the moment of the reunion May Ling put her shapely feet on the threshold of China's political destiny. Her sister Ai Ling had married H. H. Kung, a member of the powerful Kung family in China. Ching Ling took her place as secretary to Dr. Sun Yat Sen and later married the great revolutionary.

May Ling had returned to the Orient with a single purpose—to devote her life to her people. She had studied politics and ravenously acquired every fragment of knowledge that would be of use to her, but the home she returned to was a very different one from the comfortable placid household she had

left With her two sisters married to revolutionists, she herself was burning with the revolutionary spirit She was to find, however, that her long absence from her homeland had raised a great barrier between her and China She knew so little not only about China but about her own language

On the advice of her gentle, far seeing mother, she joined the Y W C A in Shanghai and threw herself into the work of remaking herself into a Chinese It was as if she were starting all over again She knew English better than her own language Her life in America had given her a taste for modern American living and thinking She was in danger of thinking as a foreigner in her own country To acclimatize herself, to learn to write correct Chinese and to speak it fluently were her ambitions Sometimes her seeming inability to get back into the national life reduced her to tears, but she fought on up the weary hill of endeavour When May Ling's teachers found that her lessons were bad, she punished herself by making herself work through the night and carrying on the next day without a break She would go for weeks without seeing anyone, without pleasure, and eating very little Several educational positions where she could make use of her knowledge of English presented themselves, but she refused them Her only recreation was work that she felt would enable her to increase her knowledge of the Chinese people and at the same time to serve them She was appointed a member of the Chinese Child Labour Commission, and later sat on the Board of Film Censors

In both positions she was faced with difficulties The people who served with her did not approve of American methods and heartily disapproved of educated Chinese women She was tolerated only because of her father's position She knew this and worked all the harder to convince her fellow workers of her eagerness and sincerity to serve There were times when rebuff piled on rebuff so heavily that the lovely young reformer was

almost tempted to break before the weight of the opposition, but in her sweet, gentle mother she found strength, consolation and guidance. Mrs. Soong, a quiet and wise Christian woman who also had received an education, was ever at hand to advise and encourage her family, and to her May Ling turned in her dark hours. Her father was too busy to be able to give much time to his daughters. His mission was to print and distribute thousands of Bibles and support the revolution to the best of his ability, which meant that the management of his household and the care of his six children were left pretty much to Mrs. Soong.

Five years after May Ling had returned home, Mr. Soong died. As the only unmarried daughter, May Ling was called upon to help her mother in settling the affairs of the business and in moving the family to a new home. In the meantime the political storm clouds were gathering afresh over China. The war lords were fighting each other, and the principles of Sun Yat Sen — "life, liberty and the right to work" — were being forgotten in the senseless struggles for power and plunder. Sun Yat Sen had been elected President, but the leaders of the various factions were disputing his right to rule. Dr. Sun's life was often in danger, and those who supported him were marked for vengeance. On one occasion the President escaped only by fleeing in the dead of night under the very swords of those who had been sent to assassinate him. His wife escaped to Shanghai disguised as a peasant woman, and when she was later joined by her husband, he was accompanied by a tall, stalwart soldier known as Chiang Kai Shek.

One night, returning from her work at the Y W C A, May Ling burst in on a family reunion. Round the table sat her mother, her sister, Dr. Sun Yat Sen and the soldier who she knew had rendered great service to the President. The soldier rose to greet her, his calm, stern face showing not a spark of interest. Perhaps he did not entirely approve of this emancipated

girl who was almost a foreigner May Ling, at all events, is said to have disapproved of him He spoke what to her was a foreign tongue, his Mandarin was halting He was gauche and awkward in his field boots, his mien was proud and unrelenting He was not a Christian and hardly a good Buddhist, and deep in her mind, too, was the Chinese prejudice against soldiers who, in the past, had been considered a low class of people Apart from their both believing in the revolution there was no common ground on which they could meet except perhaps that both had been in Japan — May Ling to join her father Chiang to study military science As the evening wore on however, she became aware that this soldier was different He was taller than the average Chinese, he spoke little, he had strange eyes with an expression that flickered between dreaminess and acute appraisal When he looked at her, she felt that she was being looked right through by those gimlet eyes

She may have remembered then that he was considerably older than she, and that he would not be interested in her any more than she was in him

But Chiang was interested Whenever he returned from his visits to Russia to Japan to his military headquarters he made a point of calling on the Soongs and although he had hardly exchanged more than a few greetings with the lovely, educated girl, he holdly and formally asked her widowed mother for her hand in marriage It was an honour, but the Soong family neither wanted nor appreciated it, in spite of his growing power Every one objected—T V Soong May Ling's brother, Mrs. Soong, her mother, and May Ling herself Their objections were that Chiang was already married, that he was not a Christian, and a hundred others They had not reckoned with the almost mystical determination of Chiang Kai Shek He was a mao accustomed to get what he wanted, even if he had to wait an eternity for it He had not educated himself as a military leader and

borne so many trials and privations to make China strong without realizing the truth of the axiom that he who wants strongly enough wins in the end. True, he had been married according to Chinese custom when he was very young, but that could be taken care of. He began by divorcing his wife, and then he returned to Shanghai to claim his bride. Again he was refused, this time by Mrs. Soong, who doubtless informed him that the Soongs were good Christian people and could not tolerate his marrying their daughter.

General Chiang was undeterred. He did not promise to become a Christian. He merely looked Mrs. Soong straight in the eye and said: "Madame, I love your daughter. I am going to marry her. Our marriage will help to bring about the salvation of China." Then he saluted her and left.

The salvation of China? Doubtless Mrs. Soong may have repeated those words of this strange, iron-willed man to her daughter. They may have kindled into flame the smouldering embers of patriotic fire that burned deep in the heart of this fine young woman, who had been knocking her talented head against the wall of the national prejudices of her associates in her work of helping the common man and woman of her nation. The Soong family may not have realized that Chiang Kai-Shek was a scholar as well as a soldier, that under the iron exterior of the disciplined warrior was the gentle, whimsical searcher after truth, steeped in the classics and living his life with an everlastingly open heart. Mrs. Soong gave him a copy of one of her husband's Bibles, perhaps as a hint that he should read it and dip into the teaching of the Saviour of the world. One report has it that Chiang told her flatly that he would not become a Christian until he was convinced that he believed in the religion. It is said, too, that he spent two days and two nights studying the book and comparing the truths contained in it with the teachings of Confucius, which closely resemble the Christian code of living.

May Ling herself may have been impressed with her suitor's persistence. She may have been searching among the coming men of the republic for a man of vision and integrity to unite the nation in the crisis that lay ahead. The next step in the drama was the announcement of their marriage which took place in the Soong home according to the rites of the Methodist Church. The general wore the regulation civilian cutaway coat and silk hat, May Ling a Western bridal gown. After a barquet to which a few close friends were invited, the pair departed on a honeymoon, and a few days later the general put on his uniform and went to war to subdue the northern war lord and bring further unity to China.

Their honeymoon was brief, but not too brief for them to understand each other in one important respect—their individual love of their country and their determination to work for it. They pledged themselves to unite their talents unswervingly and unfailingly in the service of the Republic. Madame Chiang knew the social difficulties, Chiang was aware of the military and economic problems facing him. In choosing May Ling as a wife, he had made a wise choice. She was a woman with American experience and Chinese patriotism, a human dynamo, a fluent speaker — which he was not — and a person who could keep him unerringly in touch with the outside world. He himself was educated, most Chinese were not. He knew that words could fight as well as swords and guns. He knew that this strange beautiful woman was a fitting complement to his own personality. With this knowledge the pair shouldered their terrific task.

Their marriage resulted in a number of great and what must have seemed disturbing changes in May Ling's life. She left her clean, comfortable home in Shanghai, where she could ride horseback and play tennis and went with her husband to his headquarters at Nanking. She lived in a hut for the first time,



enduring cold and hardships. Sometimes they spent days or weeks in deserted railway stations, in skin tents, in farm dwellings. Some of their quarters were filthy in the extreme. She cleaned them. As a girl, she had had a passion for cleanliness. She went down on her knees and scrubbed as would any American housewife. She carried the filth out into the open with her own hands, she made every place seem like home, and when the campaign forced the general to move, she set out to do the same thing in the new place. Her dresses were soiled, but she was clean in the midst of filth.

She washed and scrubbed, and taught the peasants in the areas the virtue of cleanliness. She fought dirt as she now fights the Japanese, relentlessly, and she decided to spread the gospel of cleanliness the length and breadth of China. At the end of the day, she was often exhausted from her labours, but she was never too tired to prepare a meal and entertain her husband, who returned mud-stained and battle-weary. At night, in those early days, she would read him stories from the Bible and from the Chinese classics, and between them they drew up the regulations for the New Life Movement which swept through China like a wildfire, purging dirt and bad living and preparing the people for the coming battle for life and freedom.

But the going was too hard. The girl raised in the lap of luxury had overtaxed her strength, and the time came when, in December, 1936, she was forced to return to Shanghai for a rest. She arrived strained and weary, a very different May-Ling from the one who had celebrated her marriage at the fashionable Majestic Hotel. Her friends noticed the difference and began to whisper that the marriage had not turned out well. May-Ling ignored them and shut herself away in her mother's house to recuperate. But not for long. The general had gone to Shensi, the northwestern province, to subdue some insubordinate troops that had rebelled against the central government.

Then the news wires flashed. The general had been taken prisoner by Chang Hsueh-Liang, the young marshal of China. May-Ling left her sickbed. She flew to Nanking. Here she met her brother and brother-in law, and William Donald, the general's Australian adviser, a tough, hard-bitten soldier of fortune. Donald flew to Sian to see what he could do. He failed to see the general, who was in solitary confinement.

Waiting for news, May Ling became impatient with the others, who seemed to be happy, that the general was out of the way. A message came from him warning her to keep away from Shensi because of the danger. She decided to go, not to plead for his life, but to fight. She carried a revolver and joined the audacious Donald. In a fever heat of courage, she gave him the revolver. "You will shoot me if I am in danger of being captured," she said to him, her eyes flashing. "That is your duty." The story had reached the pair that the general was engaging in a hunger strike. She was determined to see him. One morning she and her aide presented themselves to the rebels. The college bred Chinese woman had all the courage of a tiger. "Lead me to the Generalissimo," she ordered. "I am his wife."

Donald had pleaded with her not to be rash. By going into the prison, she herself was risking capture, thus doubling the value of the enemy's coup. She scorned the warning. "My place," she said, "is at my husband's side." She was admitted. The general sat at a table, terribly emaciated. He had not eaten for three days, but he was feeding his soul on the Holy Scriptures. He showed her a verse he had found. "Jehovah will now do a new thing, and that is, He will make a woman protect a man."

That night May-Ling stayed in the prison reading the Bible to her husband until he slept, while Donald waited outside with the guards. Then followed one of the most mysterious chapters of Chinese history. All that the world knows is that the general's

captor relented and released the pair. Not only did he marvel at the dauntless courage of May-Ling Chiang, but she also impressed him with the importance of fighting China's enemies instead of China's friends. After the Chiangs had been released, the enemies who had sniggered when the general was taken prisoner now quaked in their boots, and May-Ling, her eyes wide open to the weakness and perfidy in the high circles of the nation, became an inspired co leader with her husband. Those days in the prison cell had raised the general's morale in a strange, mystical way, and had further cemented the bond between him and his wife.

But ahead lay more difficulties, arduous and prolonged, trials that were to test the heart and physique of the little lady almost beyond human endurance. She threw herself into the work of reconstruction with a fiery zeal that made enemies for her among the slothful and appeasers. She organized the Chinese Air Service, becoming Secretary of State for Air, she began to weld the New Life Movement into the most powerful women's movement in the world. She fought the enemy both within China and without. Appreciating the power of the radio as a means of propaganda she began to "build up" her husband, advising him in regard to his speeches and giving him counsel as to the timeliness of his statements.

She was everywhere all the time, people said humorously, making endless tours of inspection writing speeches and articles for American and British consumption, building, tearing down and rebuilding. She organized Red Cross hospitals, youth camps for orphans and colleges for refugees. She visited the battlefields, rolled bandages and organized evacuation schemes.

Often under fire, she seemed to have a charmed life. In October, 1937, the car in which she was riding from Nanking to Shanghai to visit wounded soldiers was bombed by Japanese planes. It overturned and underneath it, in the mud, Donald

found her unconscious. Revived, she said, "We'll go on to Shanghai." She completed her inspection, and collapsed. The doctors found that she had a broken rib. Soon she was back at the general's side.

To all China and the world she became the symbol of fighting womanhood. While Chungking, the provisional capital, was being daily lashed by the rain of Japanese bombs, May Ling Chiang not only stayed through the days of horror, but she went out into the streets with the rescue parties and worked in the hospitals as a nurse. She wrote appeals to America, she organized instruction classes for nurses and aides. She was the lady with the lamp for thousands who were suffering. Day after day she could be seen walking to the ruined city and working amid the rubble.

Children were her special care. From the ruins of China's blasted homes she decided to save as many children as possible. In 1939, under a hail of bombing, when the ancient city of Chungking was little more than a scar on the hillside, she organized her first war orphans' camp and planned the organization that to-day is caring for millions of children, many of them rescued from the territory held by the enemy. May Ling not only organized and directed others, she worked herself. She taught the children how to evacuate during an air raid, she washed them and taught them how to scrub themselves. She instilled into them her own passion for cleanliness and fought a triumphant battle against dirt even when the bombs were falling.

One night she walked through the flaming city to an assembly centre where children were waiting to be evacuated. Her heart was heavy. It seemed impossible that mere children could live through such horror. She arrived to find the place in flames. A small boy stood guard at the door. He saluted her and proudly informed her that the children had evacuated themselves as they had been taught. It was a proud moment for May Ling.



in the midst of all that danger. The discipline she had so rigidly instilled into her war orphans was bearing fruit. She seized the little fellow, commandeered a truck and drove through the burning city to find the children. Hours later she had collected them all and left them in a place of safety. Then she tramped wearily up the hill to her own home.

Living such a life imposed a severe strain on her health. The truth, recently revealed, is that May-Ling Chiang has never enjoyed perfect health but has always outwitted illness by never allowing herself time to be sick. How hard she has worked, she alone could tell, but she would consider it useless and vain to do so.

When the general campaign was going badly for China, when India was throttled by the grisly fingers of appeasement and it seemed likely that the Japanese would seep into England's treasure house — which is China's back door — Madame Chiang and her husband flew to India. They talked to Nehru and Gandhi. To Madame Chiang fell the task of informing the women of India what the women of China were doing for their own war effort, what life would be for the women of India under Japanese rule. She told them that Chinese women were helping themselves and bearing their full share of the burden of war, her words confused and stirred the sheltered, caste-divided women. After a formal address of thanks which could not have pleased her very much, she made an extemporaneous speech in which she said: "The Japanese have already struck at Burma. Who knows what will happen when they strike at India? They will say to you, 'We come to liberate you.' But that is a lie." Then she told them straight from the shoulder, of the horrors of Nanking, of men, women and children bayoneted and buried alive — a grim, ghastly picture, which should have shaken her audience to action and alertness.

Only once throughout the war has Madame Chiang taken a real vacation. That was when she went to Shanghai before

pan attacked Pearl Harbour, to spend one short week with her two sisters and H. H. Kuog, China's Minister of Finance. That, was later reported, was not really a holiday but a diplomatic mission intended to reunite the whole family in the interests of China. Families are inclined to criticize their in-laws, and Madame Chiaog is determined at all costs to protect her husband, in whose hands lies China's destiny. She knows that Chiang is not only the man of the hour but the man of the future.

She has travelled a great deal in China. In 1942 she went alone to China's northwest territory to cope with internal problems and to preach national unity. She tramped the muddy cart tracks that serve as roads, held open-air meetings, visited homes, gave the housewives lessons in cleanliness, and met all the important leaders, including representatives of the workers. She inspected factories, organized Red Cross workshops, and laid plans for the installation of co-operative factories. When she went back to Chungking to rejoin her warrior-husband, she left the territory thoroughly converted to the new way of life, which is leading China to victory. Then her health broke down. She had steadfastly refused to see a doctor because of the urgent tasks ahead.

China, though an important member of the United Nations, felt that she was not getting her share of lend-lease aid. Madame Chiang decided to come to America to fight verbally for her country. Here was her opportunity to make the fullest use of the wonderful education given her by her Christian father. Not in vain had she spent those hard and lonely years as a student. In her speeches and her writings, she had a weapon that China needed. Here was a role in which she could well act on behalf of her soldier-husband, whose knowledge of English is limited to a few phrases.

Accompanied by a small staff, a secretary and a military expert, Madame Chiang boarded an American Liberator and

flew across the world to the United States. Unfortunately, on her arrival, she fell ill and was rushed to a New York hospital. There she lay for weeks, fighting to regain her health. At the same time, she kept on working, planning, scheming how best to serve her country. Two tasks she had to do, one was to speak to the government, another to speak to the people of America — to thank them for their past efforts to help China by their contributions to the various medical societies that devote their attention to the care of China's war-ravaged millions, and to encourage them to continue. She performed both the tasks magnificently.

She quickly became the voice of China for millions of Americans. She addressed Congress in Washington and won the hearts of all. She asked bluntly that aid should be sent to China, which had been waiting so long. She told her listeners that China had been fighting alone for five long years, and that the monotony of waiting was harder than the struggle itself. She addressed public meetings in New York and San Francisco. Once, during a speech, she wept unashamedly as she told of her war orphans and the suffering of the Chinese. She addressed native language meetings, and swept through a crowded schedule with untiring energy.

Her address in the Senate Chamber was a masterpiece of narrative and oratory. She told her listeners how one of Doolittle's gallant American airmen, after the bombing of Tokyo, had bailed out over Chinese territory and called out the only Chinese words he knew, *Mei Kuo*, meaning the beautiful land as China is known to the Americans, and how the people laughed and cheered and hugged him as if he had been a brother. Then came the story of how she had gone to a famous shrine to the Heng Hang mountains, known as the Rub the Mirror Pavilion. Two thousand years ago a young monk had sat praying and doing nothing else. His Father Superior took a brick and



began to rub it against the surface of the stone. The young monk asked him what he was doing, and the old man said, "I am making a mirror out of this brick."

"But it is impossible," said the young monk.

"Yes, it is impossible," replied the old man. "And it is just as impossible for you to acquire grace by doing nothing but praying the same words day after day." Madame Chuang continued: "My friends, I feel it is necessary for us not only to have ideals and to proclaim that we have them, but it is necessary that we act to implement them."

In addressing the House of Representatives, she quoted a Chinese proverb: "It takes little effort to watch the other fellow carry the load." She went on to say: "Midway and Coral Sea are merely steps in the right direction. Now the prevailing opinion seems to be to consider the defeat of the Japanese as of relative unimportance, and that Hitler is our first concern. This is not borne out by actual fact nor is it in the interests of the United Nations to allow Japan to continue. Let us not forget that Japan in her occupied areas has greater resources at her command than Germany. Finally, she hurled a challenge at the complacent Congressmen: "From five and a half years of experience, we in China are convinced that it is the better part of wisdom not to accept failure ignominiously, but to risk it gloriously."

When she sat down there were tears in her eyes, which still flashed the challenge of a mighty nation striving to awaken another to its danger. There were tears, too, in the eyes of her listeners. She had stretched out her hand and touched the heart of Congress as few had ever done before.

As she sat down, a handkerchief clutched in her small hands, her eyes seemed to be searching the faces near by to see what effect her words had had. The little girl who used to argue at Wesleyan, who trampled on the Manchu flag as the dynasty

tottered, who thought too much about too many things at Wellesley, had spoken for her country with fire and passion and with the mellow persuasiveness of experience

It is said that she began to compose this speech before she left China, as she sat with her husband in their little villa on Chungking's hill top, that she discussed it with him, that she polished it in her mind on the airplane trip and improved it up to the last minute. But when she made the speech, she kept thinking of her country and her people of the Chinese soldiers fighting in their foxholes with inadequate weapons, of the women and children starving by the million. That knowledge must have strengthened the power of her stirring words.

A complete and accurate picture of this great, almost super-human woman is beyond the scope of mere writing. It is fortunate for us that many examples of Madame Chiang's written and spoken utterances are available. They are well worth reading, and as time goes on their value will increase. They unite to form a key to a character that many find incomprehensible. In an article published in the *Atlantic Monthly* for May, 1942, discussing China's destiny, she wrote "We are determined there shall be no more exploitation of China. I have no wish to harp on old grievances, but realism demands I should mention the ruthless and shameless exploitation of our country by the West in the past and the hard dying illusion that the best way to win our hearts was to kick us in the ribs. Such asinine stupidities must never be repeated, as much for your own sake as for ours. America and Britain have already shown their consciousness of error by voluntarily offering to abrogate the iniquitous system of extraterritoriality that denied China her right to equality with other nations."

In the same spirit she wrote to a friend on the eve of her departure for America "I want to go to America, but I do not want people to think I am coming on a begging visit. I am not."